

WALSINGHAM;

OR,

*THE PUPIL OF NATURE.*

A DOMESTIC STORY.

By

MARY ROBINSON,

AUTHOR OF ANGELINA—HUBERT DE SEVRAC—  
THE WIDOW—VANCENZA, &c. &c. &c.

IN FOUR VOLUMES,

VOL. IV.

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W. A. L. S. I. N. G. H. A. M.

THE LIFE OF MARY

A DOMESTIC STORY.

MARY ROBINSON.

AUTHOR OF "A LITTLE HURST DEVEREUX"  
THE WIDOW'S REVENGE, &c.

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# WALSINGHAM;

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### CHAP. LXXI.

JUST as I was stepping into the chaise, Lord Kencarth followed me, and insisted on being my companion to London. I would have been thankful for his society at any other period; but in the state of mind which I then felt myself inclined to indulge, the solitude of a desert would have promised the most pleasing retreat for rumination. I could at that moment have relinquished the world for ever: I could have beheld the barren summits,

and the tawny woods of Glenowen, with a sober, sweet delight, which is not to be found in the chaos of populated cities.

Lord Kencarth entered the chaise, after ordering his servant to follow with his own carriage,—and to meet us at Devizes. I was little disposed to talk, and I knew that the young lord was still less inclined to taciturnity. In order to avoid trivial conversation, I pleaded the indisposition which I really felt, and which was the effect of my last twelve hours agitation. But with that boisterous flow of animation, which is generally the attendant of strong health of body and feeble organization of mind, he began what he called shaking off my lethargy, and raising my spirits at the expence of my understanding.

“Never think, my hearty,” cried his lordship;—“leave pedants and cynics to think;—let us be jolly: you don’t

don't know how I make the people stare as I pass through towns and villages.—Why, I am as well known on the Bath road as the milestones.—You shall see how I'll quiz the knowing ones. D—me, the girls fly helter-skelter when they see my carriage, as though they were all broke loose from their nurseries.”

“ I suppose your lordship finds more entertainment in following, than they in flying,” interrupted I, merely for the sake of saying something, my thoughts still wandering to distant objects.

“ You never were more mistaken in your life,” replied the young lord ; “ for however I may give my tongue a licence, dash my wig if I hav'n't a heart as white as a snowball. My pleasures are all as harmless as the gambols of a kitten. I hate twaddling with other people's happiness, while I find that I have plenty to do in taking care of my own. Besides, the world is wide enough for us



all; and he that can't find fun without making hearts ache, why, dash me, but he is an ass, and deserves to bear the burden of a bad conscience."

"I am exactly of your lordship's opinion," said I. "But before I judge how far your theory and your practice correspond, I should like to know what you call harmless pleasure."

"Why, pleasure that is not productive of harm," replied the young lord.

"Unquestionably," said I; "but most probably we differ as to the acceptance of the term."

"Whose judgment and experience are most likely to obtain credit?" cried Lord Kencarth; "tell me that, my hearty, and then we'll open our budget of knowledge. 'Tis easy to preach, my good fellow, but one is sometimes apt to forget the text, and become a twaddler."

"I do

"I do not pretend to inculcate any great portion of moral doctrine," said I, "for there lives not a being, whose conduct through life has been more frequently marked with error."

"So much the better!" exclaimed his lordship. "Quiz my jasey, if I don't revere your spirit, and honour your discernment. Why there's nothing like a little enterprise.—Dash through thick and thin, hustle old Prudence, kick up a row whenever she attempts to oppose you, and d—me you are the thing, my hearty."

"Are you not apprehensive that the opinions of mankind, in general, will condemn such conduct?" said I.

"Who cares?" vociferated the young lord: "not I, by all that's quizzical! Look at the conduct of older men than I:—they don't mind the world:—we all act alike; then who has any business to



find fault?—tell me that, my hearty! Dish my sconce! the higher the rank, the greater right to be amused. I have tried all sorts of sports:—I'm up to any thing:—the whole world knows Kencarth for a pupil of the true school. No man can upset a watch-box, shy at a shop window, quiz a citizen, dish a deep one, queer an old woman, or cajole a young one, better than I can. Do you know how I have passed my time since I came to years of discretion?"

"No, truly," answered I.

"Then, dash my wig, but I'll tell you. Why, in hunting, racing, rowing, quizzing, queering, badgering, boxing, mumming, drinking, driving, and making love. But this is not all;—I am a deep one at the fine arts;—I can draw caricatures, play at cricket, navigate my own cutter, fight a bull-dog, and write rum chimes for our catch-club."

"You

"You must find such a variety of occupations fatiguing both to your mind and body," said I.

"Not a bit," replied his lordship, with a shrug of indifference. "I considered them as parts of my education; but they didn't do; I soon grew tired of them, and cut the connection; for I almost broke my neck fox-hunting; was taken in, racing, by my groom's playing booty; upset my wherry, rowing, and was near drowning little Milly; was nigh dishing my adversary, boxing; got into a duel for quizzing; was hissed off my own stage, mumming; caught a fever with drinking; and was popped into Doctors' Commons for making love."

"Astonishing!" said I, "that harmless amusements should be productive of such perilous consequences."

"Give your tongue a holiday," cried the young lord, "and I'll tell you more of the same sort. Queer me, a gentleman

can't follow his own fancy now-a-days, but people of low occupations will presume to find fault and condemn one. Would you believe it, my hearty? dash my jasey, if I wasn't threatened with the pillory for drawing caricatures; though the subjects of my pencil were as well known as old copper-face at Charing-Cross. Then, to complete my disappointments, I run my cutter ashore on the Goodwins; broke a friend's leg with a cricket-ball; got my arm dangerously wounded by sparring with my bull-dog, and was voted a bore *nem. con.* at the catch-club! So, dash my wig, but I bought a tandem; put two blood horses before it; mounted a box-coat with twelve collars; sported an old girl of fashion, on the wrong side of forty, and kicked up a breeze at all the watering-places, to make the citizens stare, and to prove my nobility."

"Wonder-

“Wonderful!” exclaimed I. “The world must greatly edify by such dashing exploits, and your name cannot fail to stand high on the list of modern prowess. But with all your lordship’s industry, I do not find that mental improvement has been in the smallest degree an object of consideration.”

“There you are out again,” replied his lordship; “I am known to be a fellow of infinite taste, and have done more towards the improvement of things, than all your deep ones in both universities. Dash me, but my name ought to be immortalized;—why, I have completely ousted all pretenders to the neat thing, since I invented the flap-bang coaches, and sported the tandem. Why, I first proposed premiums for the fiercest breed of bulldogs,—made subscriptions for boxing,—and produced a fellow who could eat a live cat in the space of twenty minutes: and as for fashion, dash my jasey, if I

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didn't introduce crops, high-crowned hats, and twelve-inch bludgeons to all the fashionables from Whitechapel to St. James's. Why, do you know that I have two polygraphs?"

"I do not comprehend the term," said I.

"Dash my sconce! where have you lived?" exclaimed his lordship. "Why, you ought to know that a polygraph is a fellow that apes one's dress and manners as close as one's shadow: one that is up to all our gossip; is sick, lame, blind, gay, grave, in and out of condition, in imitation of his prototype. Why a true polygraph would break an arm, fracture a leg, knock out an eye, or starve himself into a decline, rather than lose a single trait of his noble original. It was only last year that I wore deep mourning four times, on purpose to dash my shadows in fables. Dash my jasey, but the experiment succeeded;—my phantoms

toms were taken in :— one of them was nabbed by his tailor, for the bill which he contracted ;—the knowing one smoked the sham, and my shadow was nicked and locked up, for being my representative one hour every day in Pall Mall and Bond-street."

" Alas, poor shadow !" exclaimed I ;  
" and were you not sorry when you heard of his misfortune ?"

" No ;—queer my phiz, what signified making wry faces ?" said his lordship ; " I settled the business in a shorter way :—I sent him the money, and promised to wear a drab frock for the next twelve months. Not long after this event, I met with my match in Old Vixen. The creature was as gentle as my grandmother's tabby,—but I gave her a twist of the mazzard that set her upon her pins ; she fastened on my arm, and, dash my wig, but she did me. I kept my room three weeks nursing the

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wound,



wound, while my polygraph regularly appeared in Fops-alley and Bond-street during the whole time, with his arm in a sling, and with a phiz as sharp as a hatchet. I sent him word when I got well, and, queer my caxon, but his recovery was astonishing!"

"The caprices of the human mind are indeed unaccountable," said I. "Our ancestors delighted in displaying a proud originality, but the present generation, I find, aims at the very reverse, by imitating even the deformities of nature."

"Come, none of your musty morality," cried his lordship; "I know you, my hearty;—I am not to be taken in by a lankey face and a sermon. I know how to live, though I don't preach virtue and forbearance. I never debauched an honest girl; robbed a flat at a faro-table, or run a friend through the body, to enhance my reputation. My sports are all in style;—I please myself, and hurt

no-

nobody ;—I have my tandem, my cutter, my polygraph, my bull-dog, and my old woman ; and, dash my jasey, but I am as happy as any prince in the universe.”

“ Very possibly,” said I, while reflection darted across my brain, leaving an impression of the most sombre nature. After a pause of some moments, during which imagination wandered over past and present prospects, while a fight involuntarily struggled within my breast, I again addressed his lordship : “ What hours in your busy *routine* of amusements do you devote to rest ? ” said I.

“ Why I always dose at the gabshop,” replied he ; “ I got a feat because it was the right thing. But, as my colleague employs half his time in writing speeches, and the other half in learning to repeat them, I am content to be taken in as a sleeping partner. My elocution consists of monosyllables ;—*ayes* and *noes* settle the affairs of the nation,

nation, under the present system of things, as well as all the slack-jaw of modern orators:—why, they all know that 'tis labour in vain, and I am too wise to have my ears bored and my tongue tired for nothing.”

“ But are your constituents satisfied with the services you render them?” said I.

“ I don't trouble my head about that,” replied his lordship. “ I bought my seat; and if Englishmen will submit their rights to the degradation of being sold, they cannot wonder at any use we think proper to make of them.”

By the time that his lordship had concluded his remark, to the truth of which my mind gave tacit acquiescence, the post-boy stopped at Devizes. We were ushered from our chaise with considerable ceremony by the landlord of the inn; and I, who, when alone and oppressed with wrongs, was treated like  
the

the veriest vagabond, was now, as the companion of Lord Kencarth, distinguished by the most profound respect. Bows that almost met the ground, and titles that are promiscuously bestowed on every appendage to nobility, followed us to the drawing-room. The landlord's zeal was laborious,—his countenance animated,—his language obsequious, and his memory conveniently short, whenever he glanced at my features; while I, with my pencil, wrote on the window-shutter the following

## S T A N Z A S:

Since Fortune's smiles alone can give  
Respect to fools, to knaves renown;  
Let Reason bid me calmly live,  
And Fortune mark me with her frown.

For who would buy the wretched state  
Which conscious vice or dulness knows?  
Or who be vainly, meanly great  
With pow'r that from oppression grows?

While



While Nature, with a partial hand,  
Her darling children beckons forth;  
While fools and knaves usurp command,  
And Fortune flies from modest worth.

Then give, O FORTUNE! all thy store  
To insects, of a sunny day:—

While I the paths of TRUTH explore,  
And smile the darkest hours away.

Oh, Rosanna! how vain, how empty  
are those mortals, who, as the summer  
gale sustains the gossamer, are upborne  
on the breath of popularity by their own  
lightness; while those who possess the  
more solid virtues are condemned to  
bear their unprofitable load, through the  
gloomy paths of sorrow and obscurity!

## CHAP. LXXII.

WHILE Lord Kencarth visited the stable to purchase a hunter which had been sold by Lady Emily Delvin, in part payment of Lord Linbourne's debt, I strolled towards the Black Lion to inquire after honest Ned, and to satisfy my mind respecting the fate of the young highwayman. On my arrival I found the house uninhabited; and was informed by a villager, whose cottage was not far distant, that the landlord, being suspected of having some concern in stopping the carriage of Lady Emily Delvin, had prudently absconded, to avoid the danger of a criminal prosecution. I was apprehensive that any minute inquiries on my part might increase suspicion; and therefore, without farther investigation



tion of the business, I returned to Devizes.

I found the young Lord delighted with his bargain, surrounded by grooms and ostlers, drinking and swearing with most condescending courtesy. All his polished vocabulary was displayed with familiar ease; while his jolly companions drank to his 'health and prosperity,' as he paid one hundred guineas for a beast not worth fifty; and which, being both vicious and unruly, had already endangered the lives of the most expert horsemen. I perceived that it would be in vain to offer any thing like dissuasion from the purchase; his lordship knew the ostler to be "a fellow of infinite worth—one of the right sort—up to a bargain, but honest as the light"—and I was too prudent to calumniate a great man's favourite, where I knew that admonition would be considered as impertinent interference, and while I reflected, that to attempt restraining

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ing some minds, is only to propel them on to new acts of folly and indiscretion.

As soon as dinner was over, four horses were ordered to Lord Kencarth's chaise, and I endeavoured to excuse myself from accompanying his lordship any farther. My mind was little disposed to amusement, and my heart panted for the quiet of seclusion. It was in vain that I intreated his lordship to proceed without me.

"Dash me if you shall go," said he; "I want to hire a tutor, to travel with me, and you are the thing to a tittle, my hearty; therefore make no excuses—for stay you must—and so settle your phiz, and be quiet. Quiz me, if I don't give you five hundred a year to teach me philosophy—I know every thing else that is worth learning; and when I have got a little of that, why, queer me if I am not up to any thing."

Necessity

Necessity being a powerful stimulator, and Adversity at that moment fixing her haggard eyes upon me, I thought it most prudent to accept his lordship's proposal, and to pursue the paths of mental humiliation in the new character of, what is politely termed, a modern bear-leader.

The young Lord was enraptured with the idea of flying over the continent, and of displaying his wealth at the expence of his reputation; while I anticipated the many disgraces from which reason would shrink, were it not sustained by the all-powerful force of long-established custom.

The chaise was ordered to the door, and we were descending to depart, when Lord Kencarth, stopping short, exclaimed—"Dash my jasey, Ainsforth, but you shall ride my new horse. I want to try him, and to find out whether he has any vices."

"I thank

"I thank your lordship," answered I; "but having no inclination to break my neck, I must beg leave to decline making the experiment."

"Poh, poh!" cried his lordship; "come, let us see what sort of an equestrian you are. Do you know that I can ride three horses?"

"Therefore the better able to manage one," interrupted I.

"Bravo! my hearty! you are a deep one!" said the young Lord. "But I am not so easily gulled. The horse is a good horse—the neat thing—no daisy-cutter—a nice bit of blood—fit for a prince; and quiz me, but you must mount him. I want to see his paces—to observe how he carries his head—whether he has a good forehead—and what sort of a figure he makes over a five-barred gate."

I returned no answer, but smiled.

"What! tutor!" cried his lordship, "Are you dumb-founded?—don't be  
9 fright-



frightened—Why you may guide him with a thread along a six-inch deal board for a thousand.”

“ Since the task is so easy, your lordship will act wisely to undertake it,” said I. “ Yet let me caution you to be careful; for if I am rightly informed, the animal is vicious.”

“ I like him the better,” replied his lordship: “ a beast without some shew of spirit is not worth his keep. Dash me, if I would maintain a cat that was not a match for her peer. You shall see some fun before you and I have lived together a fortnight. I know how to employ time and to acquire knowledge.”

“ Unquestionably, said I; “ for experience is the foundation of wisdom; and in the experimental way your lordship’s industry is unequalled. Yet, let me advise you not to follow the impulse of an enterprising spirit, beyond the bounds of reason and reflection.”

“ Is

“ Is that your way, my hearty ?” inquired his lordship archly. “ Do you always reflect before you decide ? Do you look before you leap ? Queer my caxon, if you are not a rum one ! but you can’t do me over ; I am not so easily bamboozled—I’m above your match, my dainty ; you can’t humbug me.”

“ That I am the most erring of Nature’s children, I readily acknowledge,” said I ; “ but we are all eager to preach what we are slow to practise.”

“ Why that’s honest, dash my jasey !” cried his lordship ; “ and, in order to please both parties in the present case, you shall continue to preach, and I to practise. You say my horse is a bad horse—I say he is a good one ; you say he is vicious—I maintain that he is as kind-natured as a lamb ; you think him dear—I know that I have him a bargain ; you are afraid to ride him—and therefore



fore I am determined to shew you some sport. So here goes—neck or nothing—little venture little have, all the world over—queer my caxon, d—— me!”

At the conclusion of this eloquent and fashionable oration, his lordship mounted the hunter; and, setting off full speed, was out of sight before I had time to enter the carriage. I ordered the post-boy to follow him, and we departed from the inn door with all possible expedition, amidst the shrugs and sneers of grooms, jockeys, ostlers, waiters, and travellers, who unanimously anticipated the fate of the equestrian hero, in his new trial of adventurous prowess.

We had not proceeded three miles on the road towards London when, in passing through a village, I observed several persons assembled round a cottage door, and peeping through the casements of the lower windows into a room which  
faced

faced the high-road. Curiosity led me to inquire the cause of their earnest attention, when a little boy informed me, that a groom had been thrown from his horse, and was taken to the cottage to have his wounds dressed. I instantly sprung from the chaise, and forced my way through the inquisitive throng: on entering the house, I discovered Lord Kencarth bleeding and almost senseless.

The wound which he had received in his fall was near the right temple, and the effusion of blood for a time suspended all sensation: with proper care and applications, however, in the space of an hour, he was able to speak; and with my assistance, after he had liberally repaid the cottager's hospitality, to enter his carriage. The horse, after he had dismounted his venturous rider, proceeded on full speed towards Marlborough, where, on our arrival at the

Castle, we found him in the hands of the ostler.

My noble pupil, though faint with his loss of blood, could not be prevailed on to remain quiet during the stage from the scene of disaster to the inn, where I proposed resting that night: a surgeon was sent for, and the wound examined. The result of his opinion was favourable to our hopes, and his Lordship was informed that on the following day he might travel with safety.

During the whole evening my pupil talked of nothing but of returning to Devizes, to "give the ostler his gruel" for having taken him in. It was in vain that I endeavoured to reconcile his mind to the event; in vain, that I reminded him of my original opinion of the animal; the young lord was duped, and self-love was mortified, though self preservation was not deemed an object of the least importance.

importance. Exploits of an eccentric nature constituted the labour and amusement of his lordship's life, and wherever he failed in his enterprises, his vanity being wounded, neither reason nor conviction of his own errors in judgment could reconcile him to the misfortune: for it is a maxim of Rochefoucauld, that "self-love is the greatest of flatterers;" and we are apt to admire the offspring of our own imagination, however it may be fashioned by bad taste, or distorted by the false decorations of an inexperienced parent.

Early on the following morning Lord Kencarth, after selling his hunter to the master of the inn for twenty pounds, set out towards London. His head was somewhat cooled by the decrease of circulation, and his pocket lighter by the purchase of the preceding day: but as his mind was irritated, and his pride humbled by an event, which either



proved want of dexterity or deficiency of judgment; in either case it was dangerous to renew the topic; and my pupil being little inclined to think of any other, we pursued our journey in fullen silence, till we reached Newbury.

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## CHAP. LXXIII.

WE stopped at Newbury only while we changed horses, and immediately proceeded on our *route* towards London. Lord Kencarth being anxious to attend a boxing-match which was to take place near Hounslow on the following morning, the post-boys were ordered to "make the best of their way," and I may with truth affirm, that they did not fail to obey the injunction. We flew with almost incredible velocity over  
plains,

plains, through villages, and along lanes, to the no small terror of those whom we met, and to the extreme peril of our own existence—Lord Kencarth encouraging the postillions with promises of liberal payment, and I every instant expecting little less than annihilation.

When we stopped within thirty miles of the metropolis, my noble pupil proposed mounting the leading horse himself. It was to no purpose I reminded him of his recent accident, or anticipated the probability of his bringing on a fever by so rash an undertaking—the horses were stopped, and the young lord, after desiring the post-boy to take care of his tutor, ordered him into the chaise, while he mounted the weary animal, and, with true equestrian grace, again set forward on his journey.

We had not proceeded more than two miles when we were overtaken by a stage coach. The driver endeavoured

to pass us, but Lord Kencarth was too ambitious to suffer such a humiliation. The son of the whip, with a contemptuous smile, commenced the career of glory. Never did the car of a victor, in ancient days of valour, dash through the fields of carnage with more triumphant dignity. Side by side, wheel almost touching wheel, did we continue to urge the flying steeds, and to roll in clouds of dust near three miles, when one of those slow nuisances, a broad-wheeled waggon in a narrow lane, presented its ponderous form, and menaced desolation. The stage-coachman continued the contest with unabated velocity. My pupil was too determined to give in, and, by endeavouring to hustle his antagonist, overset the chaise into a deep ditch, while the conqueror pursued his way with most insulting triumph.

I could scarcely help laughing, though every bone in my body was shook by the  
the

the concussion. The noble postillion was unhurt, and no damage was done, except breaking the lamps and windows of the carriage. Being near an inn, a chaise was speedily procured, and with fresh horses we continued our course; I, heartily tired of "travelling in style," and Lord Kenarth vowing vengeance against the victorious coachman.

We did not overtake the hero of the day till we came to Hounslow-heath. It was near the close of twilight, and the dusky light barely presented the object of my pupil's indignation to his inquisitive gaze. The stage coach proceeded, and we followed, till we stopped at the inn door, when Lord Kenarth, leaping from the chaise and springing forward, seized the coachman by the leg, and obliged him to descend from that eminence, which, in the eyes of my pupil, was more desirable than the laurelled car in which the son of



Jupiter Ammon overlooked the towering walls of Babylon.

The coachman, elated with success in his first trial of dexterity, flattered himself with the hope that victory would crown the termination of his exploit. But Lord Kencarth was an expert pugilist; he had taken lessons during several months from the most able professors of the science, and was considered as a finished master of that art, which, though strongly characteristic of national intrepidity, has sometimes displayed a degree of ferocity, disgraceful to a civilized people.

A combat fierce and terrible instantaneously commenced. I intreated my pupil to remember his wounded head, and informed the coachman that his antagonist was not in a condition for the rencontre. The inequality of the combatants, in point of personal strength, was evident to every by-stander; but  
though

though the hero of the whip was as athletic as Hercules, the young lord was more than his match in dexterity. There was also another requisite in which his opponent was miserably deficient; this quality, without which the powers of Atlas would be insufficient in a contest for victory, was courage. The coachman was faint-hearted; the noble, possessed the nerves of a young lion. The former, after a sharp onset of twelve minutes, gave in, and the tumultuous spectators bore the latter in triumph on their shoulders:—but mark the sequel. The vanquished sufferer was so severely beaten, that his life was despaired of: one arm was rendered for ever useless; and my pupil was induced, by that generosity which predominated over all his eccentricities, to settle an annuity of one hundred pounds on his maimed antagonist, as a voluntary recompence for the misfortune.

On the following morning we repaired to a gravel pit, which was fixed on for the theatre of pugilistic exhibition. A vast concourse of persons had assembled at an early hour, and my pupil pointed out the most popular amateurs of the science, from the gartered noble to the driver of a dust cart. There all distinctions were levelled, and a condescending familiarity was uniformly displayed, from the rank of my Lord Duke, to the lowest link-boy that earned his nightly occupation in the avenues of the theatres.

The contest was soon decided by an unlucky blow, which, to use my pupil's expression, dished the scone of the ill-fated victim. He fell; and while the eager throng shouted victorious clamours, the wretched being ended his career of glory, as he poured forth an agonized sigh which closed his busy scene for ever.

The

The multitude was scattered in all directions, while I remained, with a few thinking mortals, rapt in a reverie, and gazing on the lifeless pugilist. Poor atom of mortal frailty ! thought I, how ghastly, and how horrible thou look'st ! thy swift career of false ambition is for ever closed, and thy last act of prowess will throw a shadow on thy name, which will tarnish thy hard-earned laurels, and stigmatize thy memory. These reflections led on to the wide theatre of human nature, where the soldier, statesman, poet, and philosopher, play their adventurous scene ; and if, by any chance, they fail in one great enterprise, their last disgrace is alone remembered, while the labours of whole years are buried in oblivion.



## CHAP. LXXIV.

POWERFULLY impressed by the awful and unexpected exit of the ill-fated pugilist, I quitted his corpse, and strolled pensively towards Hounslow. The multitude had departed from the scene of death with little sorrow, and still less reflection; a desperate mortal's life was deemed a trifling sacrifice in comparison with the sport which his exploits had afforded at former periods, and the only regret which his noble patrons felt on the present awful occasion, originated in the certainty that he could amuse them no longer.

On my arrival at the inn, I instantly inquired after my eccentric pupil; but he had adjourned to a neighbouring public-house with the victor, whose situation was only one degree better than  
that

that of his lifeless antagonist. While I sat ruminating at the window which opened to the high road, my fancy wandering back to the solitudes of my childhood, and my heart sickening with disgust at the prospect before me, a deep but impressivè voice addressed me—

“ Something, if you please, to a poor old seaman, your honour; a little matter, with the blessing of God, and I shall be thankful.”

I turned towards the venerable suppliant, and my heart beat with a quickened circulation the instant I fixed my eyes upon him. He retired a few paces, and taking off his hat, exposed to view a head thinly scattered with white hairs, and which, added to a peculiar cast of expression that marked his countenance, could not fail to excite veneration and pity. He rested on his crutch, still holding his hat with both his hands before his breast. A slight shower

shower was at that moment falling; the drops had spangled his silver hairs before I recollected his situation. I desired him to cover his head—he bowed, and obeyed my orders; not as it to gratify his own convenience, but with that graced complacency which seems to experience pleasure in harmonizing the feelings of others.

I looked earnestly in his face; the deep lines of age were strongly engraven, though they had a sort of zig-zag expression, which seemed the effect of a fierce struggle with the world's unkindness. Now, thought I, if unsophisticated features present a faithful tablet of the mind, shew me a philanthropist or a philosopher, who can compare *traits* indicative of truth and honesty with this tempest-beaten old sailor.

His countenance was sun-burnt and withered; it presented the tawny hue of a rich autumn, rather than the freezing  
ing

ing vacancy of a long and dreary winter: yet I could not help thinking it exhibited something of sorrow so touching, that I would not have stirred a step, or turned my eyes on any other object at that moment, to have been made the first potentate in the universe. So much for fascination, and now for sympathy—the gradations, in some instances, are as rapid as our thoughts.

He rested on his crutch, and looking mournfully on his mutilated limb, which had till that moment escaped my notice, heaved a sigh which would have pierced a bosom of marble. “Sixty years, your honour, and nothing left but a heavy heart, and this worn out bit of timber. Hard fate for a poor old son of the green waves, your honour.”

“With whom have you served?” said I.

“I served but little, your honour; yet I saw warm work, and many a  
brave



brave soul buried in the rough ocean:—  
but an honourable grave is preferable to  
a long life of hardships.”

A sudden gust of wind blew back the  
white hairs which partly covered his  
cheek, and a big drop rolled rapidly  
from the corner of his eye. I watched  
it, and I don't know why, but I was  
sorry that it fell to the ground; I would  
have taught myself to believe that it  
was not a tear. No matter, thought I;  
if it is the effect of the cold and cutting  
wind, it is nearly the same thing. He  
again addressed me—

“I don't wish to be troublesome,  
your honour; but it is a sharp day,  
and my heart is chilled with the cold—  
a small matter would warm it, my noble-  
master. But if it is your pleasure to  
deny me, why, God bless you!”

He was going: I glanced my eyes  
towards the interior of the room where  
I was sitting; a blazing fire seemed to

invite the poor old traveller. "Come in," said I, "and warm thyself, and tell me how thou camest, at this late hour of life, to carry such a passport in thy face, and so sorrowful a heart within thy bosom."

He employed his crutch with new alacrity, and, on my opening a glass door, he entered the apartment.

"I am going to try for Greenwich, your honour," said he sighing. "I never thought to become a burthen on the humanity of my country. But what can I do? I have no property left but my bit of timber, and my heart sinks sadly when I think of happier days."

"You must forget them, my honest fellow," said I, presenting him a few shillings. "Console yourself with the certainty, that if you are not a favourite with Fortune, your case is by no means singular."

"Fortune!

"Fortune! your honour—God bless your kindness," answered he. "I do not complain of Fortune; she is no friend to honesty: my affliction is more keen than that of poverty. My story is a sad one, your honour; you would not like to hear it. You don't seem to be one of the rough sort, who can turn with a dry eye from an old sailor's misfortunes."

"Well, let me hear it," said I; "perhaps there may be found a remedy——"

"My sorrow lies deep, your honour."

Again he paused—

"Not beyond the reach of mortal aid?" said I.

"In the grave, your honour."

Again he sighed deeply.

"There is no remedy but submission to the will of Heaven;" added he, with a shake of the head, and a melancholy expression of countenance, which increased

creased the strong interest I already felt in his favour.

I have ever been strangely inclined to become a physiognomist; there are features which, somehow or other, seize upon my feelings with unaccountable powers of fascination: I have felt liking and disliking as the form of an eyebrow or the curve of a lip has influenced my fancy; and, nine times in ten, I have proved by experience, that the first impression did not deceive me.

"Come, tell thy story, my honest soul," said I; "it will relieve thy full heart, and, perhaps, enable it to bear an accumulation of sorrow without breaking it."

I reached him a chair by the fire-side, and filled him a goblet of wine from a bottle that stood before me; he drank it eagerly. "Now," said I, "thou wilt be able to get through the business stoutly."

He

He pressed his right hand on his breast, and passing the left across his eyes, which were nearly overflowing, began his story:—

“ I am a native of Wales, your honour; I was born among mountains that reached the very sky. My parents were as honest as the light, and I was, at my setting out in life, as happy as the day was long.”

I felt a strong desire to bid him depart; something of sympathy began to excite emotions which it had long been the labour of my mind to overcome. After a moment's hesitation he proceeded—

“ In my youth I was brought up to husbandry, and many a long summer-day have I laboured in the vallies of Glamorganshire. It was sweet labour, your honour; for it was followed by rest, and supported by a good conscience. I could wrestle with any  
youngster



youngster of my county, and no lad was better known for a strong arm and a fair character. 'Tis a poor withered fin now, your honour," said he, stretching forth his arm, and looking at it with a melancholy smile; "but time and sorrow will pull down the strongest.

"At twenty, I fell in love, your honour. The girl was as fresh as a daisy, and had a heart as tender as—your honour's. Little Peggy Gwynn was the prettiest flower that ever grew among the mountains of Glamorgan. It would have done your heart good, your honour, had you seen her dance, and heard her sing; but she is in Heaven, and her poor Griffith is a beggar."

Again he paused, and seemed to wander in imagination over the paths of his early life. "Ah! your honour," said he, wiping his eyes, "had you known her, you would have thought as I did; she was as fair as a lily, and as innocent

as

as a turtle-dove. But, as Fate would have it, the squire fell in love with her, and all kinds of temptations were offered to lead Peggy astray, your honour; but she was as virtuous as the light, and turned a deaf ear to all his professions, till her friends, to put her out of his way, sent her to London. It was on a winter morning that she set out; the snow fell and covered the mountains, and the torrents poured along the lanes like a deluge, your honour. I walked by the side of her horse; a kinsman rode before her—she said but little; yet she looked, your honour, as though her heart was breaking. At last we came to the turnpike where we had agreed to part, and her kinsman desired me to return home, and tell her friends that they were safe on the great road to London. If I have a soul to be saved, your honour, I thought I should never survive the separation. I went back,  
and

and I tried every way to bear my affliction like a Christian ;—but all would not do :—not a mountain nor a valley met my eyes, but it reminded me of Peggy ; and life at last became, as it were, a burden, your honour.”

Every vein in my heart throbbed in unison with old Griffith’s as he advanced in his story.

“ So, your honour, one morning in the following spring, just as the sun rose, I set out to follow Peggy. I had scraped together all my store of riches,—not much, your honour,—but it was the reward of honest industry ; and resolving to travel on foot, proceeded towards London.

“ I was not long on my journey :—love makes a man mighty swift-footed, your honour. On my arrival, I inquired my way to the place of Peggy’s residence, for she never failed to write every week ; and her letters were tallies  
of

of her heart, your honour:—I used to keep watch for their arrival as though I was waiting for an enemy; and my heart was as light as a feather whenever I heard that she was well and prosperous. But, to return to my story, your honour.

“ I found on my arrival in London that Peggy’s relations lived in the far end of the city; and though I had walked thirty miles since sun-rise, I was nothing faint, your honour, for my courage was kept up by the hope of seeing Peggy. In my way, as fate would have it, what should I meet but a press-gang. I was seized and carried on board a tender. I sent my little store to my poor forlorn girl, and in twelve hours after set sail to meet the enemies of my country.

“ We had not been many days at sea, when we met the enemy;—’twas hot work, your honour! Many a stout-hearted

hearted seaman perished on that day ;— but we dealt the foe such an example of English bravery, that the victory was ours before sunset. All the time I thought of Peggy, your honour, and just as I was calculating how happy we should be with my share of prize-money, whiz comes a cannon-ball, and lops off one of my timbers as clean as a whistle, your honour. I didn't much care about it, —only—I was afraid that Peggy might like me something the worse ;—but I was a lubber for my pains, your honour, and deserved to be keelhauled for my suspicions.

“ On our return home we met with a storm ;—such a dreadful hurricane never blew from the heavens :—the sea rose mountains high, and every soul expected to go to the bottom. We hoisted the dead-lights, and fired signals of distress, but they were heard, your honour, no more than a pop-gun. At last



the pumps began to choke, and we were obliged to throw our guns overboard; so some began to tire, and some to despair; and I began to pray for patience and resignation to the heart of poor Peggy."

I filled him a second goblet of wine, and he proceeded:—

"At break of day, your honour, we found ourselves near the French coast, and separated from our companions. The ship was almost a wreck; and, to add to our misfortunes, an enemy's frigate bore down upon us. We were obliged to strike; so I was hauled ashore, with my shattered limb, and thrown into a prison at Bourdeaux. I wrote to Peggy, but I was a prisoner, and had no token of love to send her.—Indeed she wanted none, for her heart was not to be bought with gold—though it might break with sorrow. No matter! she is in Heaven, your honour!

and

and little thinks that her poor Griffith, grown old and helpless, is wandering about the world—a beggar.”

“Thou art going to a tranquil asylum, my brave fellow,” said I.

“Ah, your honour!” cried he, with a movement of his head that implied his doubt of my assertion, “there is no resting-place for sorrow, but in the grave! Shall I go on with my story, or does it tire your honour?”

“Proceed,” said I.

He went on—

“After fourteen months imprisonment I was exchanged, and sent back to England. I was almost afraid to appear before Peggy without my timber; for what with one thing and what with another, I cut but a sorry figure, your honour. But my poor girl found no alteration in me, except the want of a leg, and a heart more fond of her than ever. I found her as true as the needle!—and

though many a salt wave had washed over my head, she had not forgot me, but by her industry had increased my little store three-fold, your honour. We were soon after married."

Here he stopped abruptly: his cheek displayed a convulsive motion, the effect of his efforts to suppress a tear, which, in spite of his endeavours, fell on the withered hand that rested on his crutch.

He went on—

"We set up a little shop near Wapping, and sold slops, your honour. My messmates loved me, and things went on prosperously. I was as happy, your honour, as the day was long. Peggy used to work at her needle from sun-rise to sun-set, and I considered the day that I lost my timber the luckiest of my life, your honour, for my poor girl always told me she loved me the better for it."

Here he wiped his eyes with the corner of a silk handkerchief that he  
wore

wore round his neck, and, by his evident emotion, I anticipated the termination of his story.

He continued—

“ After four years of comfort, your honour, it pleased the Almighty to take my poor girl from me. She knew that she was going; and as I sat by her bedside, with a breaking heart, your honour, she looked in my face, and begged me to love and to take care of her babes. I could not speak, but I pressed her cold hand, and she smiled, your honour, just for all the world like a cherubim! So then I begged her to take comfort, and to live for my sake; but all would not do—she looked as if she wished to speak—she took my hand and kissed it, and two or three minutes after, with a sigh, she closed her poor dear eyes, and died like a lamb, your honour.

“ I was now left alone with my motherless babes; the eldest was a girl

three years old, your honour; she could talk, and I used to fancy that her voice was like her mother's; the youngest, a boy, was taken by Peggy's relations, for he was only five weeks' old when it pleased God to take from me the comfort of my heart. After I had seen my poor girl laid in the grave, I had little mind to continue in business; but gave myself up to grief, your honour, and had no heart for any thing; so that in three months, by the time that I had paid the doctors for attending my wife, and my creditors were satisfied to the last farthing, I found myself going down in the world, for want of a helpmate; and one summer's day I set out with my little Judy for Pembrokehire:—I was alone in the world, and all places were alike to me, your honour!—But to make short of my story;—I am afraid I intrude upon your honour.”

“ Thy



"Thy story is an interesting one, my good fellow; go on," said I.

"Your honour is very kind, and God bless you!" cried old Griffith.—"So I bought a little hut on the sea-shore, and employed myself in making nets for the fishermen that used to come with their smacks round from the Irish coast. They all knew poor Griffith, and they never failed to purchase my work as fast as I could finish it, your honour.

"My little Judy was my only companion; she grew stout and hearty, and by the time she was nine years old, she could cook my dinner and trim up our little cabin; and she used to pick up shell-fish; and—in short we were reconciled to our lot, which is every thing, your honour. But as fate would have it, just as Judy had passed her thirteenth year, one night, during the equinox, a gallant vessel was wrecked among the rocks within sight of my hovel. A small

boat, with the few souls that escaped before she went down, was cast on the beach not a cable's length from my hut; I hastened to their assistance, and, breast-deep in the salt waves, brought a lady ashore upon my shoulders. She was as comely a woman as ever the sun shone upon!

“At first she was afraid of me, for shipwrecked souls sometimes meet with but sorry treatment on the coast, your honour; so she begged me not to use her ill:—but, the Lord bless your honour!” continued he, laying his hand upon his heart, “I would have suffered death rather than have done her any wrong. She stayed four days in our poor habitation, before she could stir out of my cot:—her companions by turns used to rest in little Judy's hammock. On her departure she offered gold, and many valuable treasures, saved from the wreck, but I would not be paid for doing my  
my

my duty, your honour. Finding that I refused her favours, she proposed taking my little Judy and making her fortune, and said that she would give her learning like a lady. What could I do, your honour? It was a hard trial—Judy was willing to go with the lady, and I was not such a selfish lubber as to stand in the way of her advancement.”

“ Poor fellow ! it was cruel to take from thee thy only companion,” said I.

“ Well, your honour, on a fine calm evening, away they went, and I was left in my hovel, on the sandy beach, without a friend in the world to comfort me. My mother had died while I was at sea ; and my father, who soon followed her, never acknowledged me, because I deserted my home for Peggy. Often did I lie whole winter nights thinking on my little Judy, and wondering why she never wrote to tell me of her good fortune. Many years passed, and no news

came; at last I concluded that she was dead; so I made a sort of tomb on the cliff, near my poor hut, and planted some trees about it, and carved upon it my dear wife's name and that of my poor Judy—and there, your honour, I used to sit and make my fishing-nets, and hear the salt waves dashing against the rocks or rolling on the sands, even to the very threshold of my little hovel.”

“ And did you never know what became of your daughter?” said I.

“ Never, your honour. I used not to see a soul except the fishermen, from year's end to year's end, and only knew how time passed away by the changing of the seasons. Sometimes in the depth of winter, the sea would roar like thunder, and the surges threaten to beat down my poor low hut. But Heaven was bountiful, and spared me.”

As he paused, reflection darted across my mind; and I could not help condemning

denning those beings who, in the full enjoyment of every luxury, complain of Heaven's injustice, and hourly wish for death, while the poor old sailor, neglected by his kindred, forgotten by the world, persecuted by poverty, and tortured by the memory of his long-lost treasures, even amidst the rending sorrows of his heart, with a smile confessed that 'Heaven was bountiful, and spared him!'

"And why didst thou quit the wave-beaten hovel?" said I.

"Why, your honour, the sea-breezes and the winter-storms shattered the poor habitation till it was dangerous to live in it. I had not strength to rebuild it—age and infirmity came fast upon me—and one winter morning, not long since, I took it into my head to set out for London. I climbed the cliff to take a last look at my poor Peggy's tomb. The ocean was as bright as silver, your honour;



nour; the sun shone as lively as though it had been spring; and the salt waves made the air as fresh as a May morning. I had hardly resolution to depart; but my little roof was nearly fallen in, and the foundation had, only twelve hours before, rocked as the wind howled round it. So, your honour, I carved the name of poor Griffith Blagden on the cliff, and with a heart as heavy as lead, your honour, set out upon my journey."

I found by the conclusion of the old sailor's story, that he was the neglected father of the detestable Mrs. Judith Blagden. My heart, which sympathised in his artless narrative, was roused from the impression it made by indignation, and without waiting to question him farther, I ordered the waiter to take him into another room, and to give him whatever he chose to eat, while I went in search of my truant pupil.—I met him returning to the inn—I told him the story of the old sailor,

sailor, and he united with me in earnest wishes to mend the veteran's fortune, and to investigate the story of his unnatural daughter.

As soon as the venerable forlorn had made a hearty dinner, Lord Kencarth proposed dispatching his servant with him in a post-chaise for London; with orders to provide him an apartment, and to supply him with every comfort that his age and necessities demanded.

"You shan't accept Greenwich, my buck, dash my jasey!" exclaimed his lordship. "Your old nob shall have a pillow of your own to rest on as long as I have a guinea in my pocket. Quiz my caxon, but you shall live in clover, my old admiral, and forget that there is such a thing as poverty, till you close your peepers, and give us the go-by."

"Your honour, I do not understand you," said the veteran.

"So

“ So much the better,” replied my pupil; “ the greater will be your surprise, my hearty.—Dash my wig, if you shan’t dance a hornpipe at my wedding, and square your elbows with the best of ’em. Dish my sconce, if you shan’t have a silver leg, that shall dazzle the daylights of all the yellow admirals in the dead list of live-stock, my dainty.”

“ But, your honour, I am old, and only want a day of rest before I end my journey to the grave,” said the venerable sailor.

“ Dash me, but you shall have many a day of rest, and many a day of jollity too, my old stock-fish. Why, you don’t think that I am such a flint-hearted twaddler, but I can honour grey hairs, and find out an honest soul among a million? Do you know who I am?—Why, dash me, I am Lord Kencarth—Did you never hear of me in your Welsh hovel,  
my

my dainty?—Queer my nobility, why I thought every body knew me.”

The chaise drew up to the door, and my generous pupil, taking the sailor's arm, helped him to mount the step:—“Come, tumble up, my deep one,” cried his lordship: “the wind sets fair for a safe port, and you have nothing to do but to keep still between decks.—Dash my jasey, but you're in luck, my jolly! so have a stout heart, and I'll pay the reckoning—till we balance our accounts at doomsday.”

The chaise drove on, and I returned with my noble pupil to the parlour.

Lord Kencarth being determined to remain that night with the victorious pugilist, who was in a perilous situation, I retired early to my chamber. The day had been a busy one, and my brain was fatigued with the perpetual changes of sensation that had pervaded every fibre. When I reflected on the long  
life

life of solitary anguish which old Griffith had been destined to experience, I shrank at my own restless spirit, which had so frequently betrayed me into impatience, bordering on despair. Weary with thinking, I laid my head upon my pillow; but the tenour of my thoughts, though sleeping, still turned upon the events of the last twelve hours, till I was startled from a feverish dream which presented the following vision.—

Lost on a rock of dreadful height,  
And shrowded by the gloom of night,  
A weary EXILE flood!  
No wintry star its feeble ray  
Shot forth to point the craggy way,  
Or guide his devious steps to shun the foamy flood!

Above, the warring tempest howl'd,  
And near the rav'nous SHE-WOLF prowl'd,  
A cataract plung'd below!  
He shrank!—The bleak blast yell'd around,  
He totter'd o'er the gulph profound,  
While ev'ry startled sense was agoniz'd by woe!

For,



For, robb'd of joy, of peace bereft,  
Adversity no balsam left,  
To heal the stings of scorn;  
No sigh of love his pain beguil'd,  
On him no friend, no kindred smil'd,  
To draw from memory's wound affliction's rankling  
thorn!

Disdain'd by fortune, stung by art,  
And tortur'd with a feeling heart,  
Which hope had left to break!  
His sigh was lost amid the blast,  
And Fancy, madd'ning on the past,  
Bade tears, corroding tears, steal down his wither'd  
check.

Then why should he, with haggard eye,  
Start from the she-wolf prowling nigh,  
Or dread the gulph below?  
Why totter o'er the dreadful sleep,  
And bear the pelting storm, and weep,  
When one short step would end the tyranny of woe?

Poor EXILE! why such fears endure,  
When Nature's hand presents a cure,  
Which only death can give?  
Methinks the wretched wand'rer cries—  
“GUILT seeks the grave;—the COWARD dies;  
“While VIRTUE nobly dares to suffer and to LIVE!”

## CHAP. LXXV.

I FOUND that my slumber was broken by Lord Kencarth, who had entered my chamber to tell me that his pocket had been picked during his absence the preceding evening, and that his loss amounted to a no less sum than four hundred pounds. I instantly rose and dressed myself; a chaise and four was ordered, and three hours before day-break we set out for London. In sixty-nine minutes we reached Hanover-square—His lordship's town residence was spacious, and every thing about it evinced expence, bordering on prodigality.

As soon as we had done breakfast, we departed on foot for the Police-office, to give information of the robbery: in our way thither, passing through a narrow street

street near Piccadilly, we observed a chariot driving with terrible speed before us. The coachman was evidently intoxicated, and the horses, being high-spirited, suddenly turning the corner, overset the carriage on the pavement.

“Dish my sconce, but this is a pretty spot of work!” exclaimed Lord Kencarth, darting forward, and seizing the reins, while the horses continued plunging, and the inebriated coachman lay senseless on the footway. I opened the door, and by the only glimmering lamp that remained burning, could just perceive a female reclined in the corner of the carriage. By her making no effort to emancipate herself from her confinement, I concluded that she had fainted, and, with Lord Kencarth’s assistance, lifted her from the chariot, and placing her on the step of a street-door, left her to the care of my pupil, while I flew to St. James’s-street for a chair. Fortunately

tunately I found one, and the lady was placed in it, still totally insensible to all that was passing.

The coachman, being severely wounded on the head and stunned by his fall, my companion undertook to lead him to a surgeon's in the neighbourhood, while I walked before the chairmen to Hanover-square.

The dawn began to break just as we entered the house, and the chair being placed in the hall, I opened the door to release the terrified incognita, when my astonishment was awakened by the sight of Isabella. She was just recovering from her swoon, and, looking at me as though she beheld a spectre, she feebly articulated—"Oh, Heavens! where am I, and how came I hither?"

Rising from her seat with more resolution than strength, she advanced a step forward, and, trembling with apprehension, eagerly snatched hold of the chairman's

man's arm, again exclaiming—"Whither have you brought me? Speak, or I shall expire with terror."

"You are safe, Miss Hanbury," said I; "and I trust that you will not feel an augmentation of alarm, in knowing that you are under my protection. This house is Lady Kencarth's."

"Then I am safe," cried Isabella, smiling, and recovering from her surprise.

"You would have been equally so, had it been any other," said I, taking her hand and leading her to the drawing-room; she looked round her, and viewed every object with an eye of suspicion. At length, making me a formal curtsy, she replied—"I am much indebted to you for your kindness, Mr. Ainsforth; after what has passed, I really did not expect such an instance of attention.—You will enhance the obligation by ordering



ordering a servant to call me another chair, and to attend me to Lady Aubrey's."

The coldness of her manner and the severity of her reproof, took from me the power of utterance—I rung the bell—a servant entered the room—and after some hesitation I obeyed her commands. She smiled, and ceremoniously thanked me.

"Did you say to *Lady Aubrey's*?" cried I with a hesitating voice.

"I did," replied Isabella gravely.

"Astonishing!" exclaimed I. "Forgive me, Miss Hanbury, but I cannot hide the sentiment I feel—the mystery of your whole conduct—"

"The mystery!" repeated Isabella, somewhat piqued; "now you are indeed taking upon you the authority of a friend."

"Have I no claim to the title?" said I.

"None!" answered Isabella—"You have forfeited all claims to friendship as well as to confidence."

"How? tell me, I conjure you."

"By your ingratitude to Colonel Aubrey, and your perfidy to Miss Woodford."

I shrunk and was silent.

"Have you any commands to Lady Aubrey?—She arrived in town only yesterday, and in a few days will return to Glenowen," said Miss Hanbury.

"I have no friends at Glenowen," answered I, throwing myself on a sofa, and almost frantic—"Perish every thing that belongs to it."

"My brother would little thank you, Mr. Ainsforth, if he heard your wish."

"Why, why will you urge me on to madness, and then condemn me because I am a maniac. I respect, I revere your brother, Isabella—but he has, like the  
rest

rest of the world, abandoned both me and my fortunes."

"Why did you never write to him?" said Isabella earnestly.

"I did write frequently, but my letters were unanswered."

"He never received them," interrupted Miss Hanbury; "and most probably they were intercepted."

"By whom?" said I.

"By Mrs. Blagden—Certain I am, that there has been treachery somewhere," continued Isabella; "for every transaction of your life has been regularly communicated to Lady Aubrey, and by her repeated to my brother.—— Lady Emily Delvin's letter, informing us of your rash and criminal conduct towards her, and of her lenity in suffering you to escape, was not the least prominent event in the long catalogue of your indiscretions."

"And

“ And did you believe me such a villain?”

Isabella turned towards the window, but made no answer.

“ Speak, I conjure you,” continued I; “ acquit me of the charge; for by all that it is dear to *honour*—”

“ Hold, Mr. Ainsforth! remember Amelia Woodford, and do not profane the word,” said Miss Hanbury: “ talk not of faith at the very moment that you are an avowed apostate. Reason, gratitude, and humanity plead against you, and charge you with a violation of their laws; while every feeling, every honourable mind, condemns you.”

“ Miss Woodford was her own destroyer—I was an involuntary seducer; I meant not to betray her; I formed no premeditated plan against her honour; for even on that fatal night, when she fell a victim to my despair—I took her for another.”

“ For whom did you take her?”

The question struck my brain like electricity. I was convulsed in every joint—she smiled insultingly. Love, rage, revenge, again assailed my soul. I snatched her to my heart—she shrieked, and at the same moment Lord Kencarth rushed into the drawing-room.

“ Oh, my Lord!” exclaimed Isabella, “ rescue me from this monster!”

“ My Lord, I command your absence,” said I; “ this lady is my property.”

“ Indeed, my Lord,” said Miss Hanbury, “ there is not a syllable of truth in what Mr. Ainsforth utters. I came hither under his protection, and he has insulted me like a ruffian. Let me intreat that you will accompany me to Lady Aubrey’s.”

“ O ho! is it so, my little one?” cried Lord Kencarth, whistling and folding his arms as he fixed his eyes on Isabella. “ Dish my jasey, but this is Sir Sidney’s mistress!



mistress! Why you need not have been so squeamish, my dainty; for, dash my wig, if Ainsforth is not as well-looking as your finical Welsh baronet. I like to do a good-natured thing as well as any body; but queer my caxon, if I'll take you to any Sir Sidney in Christendom, unless Ainsforth desires me."

"Do you know me, my Lord?" said Isabella sternly.

"I know that you are d—d handsome," replied his lordship—"and that's as much as I want to know."

So saying, he caught her hand, and with easy familiarity drew her towards him. She resisted—I began to fear that some new insult would be offered her; for though I had violated the laws of propriety towards her myself, I could not permit another to follow my example.

Lord Kencarth now caught her in his arms, and would have forced a kiss from her—she burst into tears, and turning  
E 2 towards

towards me, exclaimed—"O God! is it Walsingham who refuses to protect me?"

I sprung from the sofa, and tearing her from the arms of my young pupil, conjured her to believe that my conduct and my life were at her disposal.

Lord Kencarth, at a loss to comprehend the meaning of my conduct, gazed on Miss Hanbury for several minutes with silent astonishment—"Quiz my nobility!" exclaimed he, "who *does* she belong to? *She* talks of Lady Aubrey—you say she is your property—and *I* know she is the mistress of Sir Sidney. Return to Lady Aubrey she *shan't*—stay with you she *won't*—and therefore go with me she *must*. Dish my jasey, if I won't give you a viz and a settlement; and you shall sport a better establishment, have more diamonds—and the finest cattle of any woman in the three kingdoms: and dash my wig,

if

if you shan't put all the gallant grandmothers in the circle of St. James's out of countenance, for the first time in their lives, my dainty; and when we have lived together till the town has done talking, why then, queer my connections if I don't marry you."

Miss Hanbury, no longer able to bear Lord Kencarth's language, rung the bell violently; and, rushing out of the room, was hastening towards the street-door, when I flew to overtake her. She darted into the street, and though splendidly dressed, (for she was returning from Lady Amaranth's assembly when the accident happened,) she proceeded on foot across the square. It was not more than seven o'clock; and a robe of silver muslin with a towering plume of white feathers were but ill-adapted to a morning walk in the streets of the metropolis.

## CHAP. LXXVI.

Miss Hanbury continued to walk haughtily, and I to attend her, without either of us uttering a syllable. The stern indignation which was pictured in her countenance, convinced me that every attempt to palliate my conduct would prove fruitless; I therefore consoled myself with the idea that, by accompanying her, I should discover the abode of Lady Aubrey; and I resolved to wait patiently for some future opportunity, when her mind should be more disposed to hear my extenuation. She stopped at a door in Lower Brooke-street, and knocking vehemently, it was presently opened by a servant, whose joy at seeing her was too evident to escape my notice. I bowed, and left her; she entered the house, and I hastened



I hastened towards Hanover-square to explain the morning's adventure.

I found Lord Kencarth with a thronged levee of personages, as various in the professions as in their outward forms—boxers, jockies, language-masters, gamblers, French dancers, and English tradesmen, thronged his lordship's anti-chamber, and were waiting for separate audiences—his Swiss valet attending the word of command, as master of the ceremonies.

On entering Lord Kencarth's dressing room, I found him engaged in giving instructions to the police officer for the recovery of his pocket-book.—

“Mind, my hearty, if the vagabond has any family, or you believe that it is his first offence, you must tip him the blink, and think no more of the matter. I should be sorry to transport a poor knave, dash my jasey; but if he is one of your deep ones, nab him, my knowing one, and



give him a sea-voyage to mend his morality."

"I take you, my Lord; I vill, you may depend on my behaving handsome, my Lord. I ben't von of your sneakers—I always acts upon honour, and knows ven I am benefiting the community. But, my Lord, I hope you vill indemnify me in case of accidents—I may get a leaden habeas to the next world, or be turned out of my profession for too much lenity; and then you know, my Lord—"

"Quiz you for a deep one!" cried Lord Kencarth—"There, you twaddler, there's five guineas for you—so now dish yourself off, and keep your own counsel."

The man of justice vanished, and Monsieur Beauvais next ushered in Mr. Hedge, a gentleman well known on the turf, no less for his successful enterprises than for his invincible courage. Mr.  
Hedge

Hedge had fought four duels in England, five on the continent, and had, by indefatigable industry, acquired a fortune sufficiently independent to dub him *comme il faut* in the circles of dissipation, though his first entrance into the world was from the obscurity of an oyster-cellar, and the occupation of his youth was that of an itinerant tinker. As he grew up, Nature bestowed on him a handsome person, and Fortune, jealous of her rival's power, threw him in the way of a buxom widow, who, thinking he would continue to mend, bewitched and married him. She did not long survive the union—and at the end of six months her disconsolate husband formed an alliance with a strolling actress—a lady whose pleasing voice and liberal patronage have since been the theme of public admiration. By this lady's interest with persons of high rank, Mr. Hedge obtained a commission in the

army, assumed the name of Captain, and divided his hours between the turf and the hazard-table; till intoxicated by the success of his undertakings, and grown into consequence, the cellar, the tinker's budget, the buxom widow, and the tuneful patroness were entirely forgotten.

Mr. Hedge made my pupil a morning visit to receive a cool five hundred, which he had won the preceding week at Newmarket.—Lord Kencarth, though not present at the race, knew Mr. Hedge to be a man of honour, and the debt was paid by a draft on his banker without a moment's hesitation.

The next visitor ushered into the audience-chamber was Mr. Topas, the jeweller, another personage of infinite honesty.

Mr. Topas advanced with a bow of profound veneration; and taking a small  
morocco

morocco case out of his pocket, thus addressed my pupil—

“ Brought your Lordship a *bijou* of infinite beauty—a pink diamond of the first water—belonged formerly to an illustrious but unfortunate female personage—cost three thousand guineas at Vienna—can sell it for half the sum.”

“ Quiz me ! if I ever saw such a thing as a pink diamond since I opened my peepers !” cried Lord Kencarth. Then taking the case from the jeweller, he continued ; “ Dish my wig ! if it isn’t the neat thing, Ainsforth !—Have you any more of the same sort ?”

The jeweller replied, “ The only one in the kingdom ;—the largest in Europe, my Lord : had it only weighed three grains more, it would have been worth any money. By day its lustre is orient and dazzling, but by candle-light its splendour is not to be described ! Seven persons of the first rank have sent  
R 6 for



for me to shew it them. I thought that your lordship might like to have it, and gratitude for past favours induced me to give your lordship the preference."

"I'll have it, by all that's quizzical," cried his lordship. "Dish me, if it sha'n't put out the peepers of twenty dowagers to-morrow night at the opera."

I shook my head, and whispered, "Take time to reflect:—have the jewel valued."

Mr. Topas again addressed his lordship:—"My Lord, you will never meet with such a magnificent gem during your lordship's life:—it is fit to adorn the hand of a prince. Shall I leave it? Suffer me to put your lordship's name on my books for fifteen hundred—a mere trifle, when the transcendent beauty of the jewel is considered. Mrs. Begum has sent to look at it, but I thought it my duty first to wait upon your lordship."

"O!



"O! dash my wig if I don't have it," cried my pupil.

Again I ventured to check his arm, and to whisper—"Beware."

"Can't I keep it a day or two to consider of it?" said his lordship.

"Why—my Lord,"—replied Mr. Topas, hesitating as if to form an excuse; "I have promised to shew it to several persons of fashion this morning; and, to tell your lordship the truth, a foreigner of distinction is in treaty for it, to embellish the crown of the Empress of Russia:—a day's neglect may prevent my disposing of it to infinite advantage; and I am sure that your lordship would not wish me to sustain any loss by obliging you."

"Mayn't I shew it to a jeweler-grinder? Dash my jasey, if I am any judge of diamonds," said Lord Kencarth.

I nodded my approbation of the proposal.

"Why,

“ Why, my Lord, I have pledged my word of honour to the owner of the jewel, who is a person of very considerable rank, an emigré of distinction, not to expose the diamond to any of the trade :—the value would be considerably diminished by its being hawked about, and the article is so uncommonly beautiful, that I am sure of a purchaser if your lordship does not like it. I have no motive, my Lord, but to oblige your lordship, as a person of taste, and one of my best customers.”

Mr. Topas was replacing the jewel in its case, with all imaginable *sang froid*, when Lord Kencarth desired once more to look at it.

“ Dish me, if it isn’t the neat thing, Ainsforth! I should like to have it, because nobody else has got such a one,” cried my pupil.

“ Fifteen hundred guineas might be better employed,” said I.

“ I do

"I do not wish to be paid," said Mr. Topas, bowing obsequiously. "The honour of his lordship's name upon my books is quite sufficient: I shall wait my Lord's own time: we have some little account now standing—a mere trifle—about seven thousand."

"Dish my nobility, how do you make that out? It was only two thousand but three months ago," said my pupil. "Why, you're going your lengths, my deep one."

"Your lordship shall hear the items: I have a memorandum in my pocket-book, which I made when I took the orders," said Mr. Topas, taking out a large *porte-feuille* and reading.

"Six pair of new-invented spring shoe-buckles—seven gold watch-chains—a brilliant *fausse-montre* for Lady All-trap—a ditto set of fan-sticks for the Duchess of Riversford—a diamond opera-glass for Kitty Bronze—your  
7 lordship's

lordship's hair, set with large pearls, for Miss Amoret; and an ivory pin-case for your lordship's mother. Your lordship will be pleased to recollect, that you also ordered a dozen diamond hoop-rings to make presents, and a *ceinture* of rubies for Lord Faircourt's mistress the pretty actress:—besides some gold toys for Mrs. Winkwell's daughter, and an emerald Shamrock for Mrs. O'Liffy."

"Queer my sconce! if it is not all as right as my eye; but I must have the pink diamond notwithstanding; it will always sell for the money," cried my pupil.

Again I conjured him to reflect.

"Sell, my Lord!—why any jeweller in Europe will give you the sum you pay for it, after you have worn it a whole winter, my Lord," said Mr. Topas. "Besides, your lordship should recollect, that diamonds were never at so low a price as at this juncture. The unfortunate

fortunate nobility of France have overstocked the markets, and jewels of every denomination are become a mere drug, my Lord. Had not this been the case, your lordship would not have purchased this superb *bijou* for less than three thousand. Think of the difference, my Lord: in less than a twelvemonth it will be worth its original price. Take it to the side-light, my Lord; it has all the vivid and transcendent colours of the rainbow, with the lucid lustre of the whitest brilliant! Nothing can be more orientally superb! It would embellish the cabinet of the Grand Sultan, as it once did the most beautiful hand in the universe! Suffer me to leave it:—permit me to inform the nobility, that your lordship is the purchaser. There is not its equal in Europe:—your lordship will have it then?—Thank you, my Lord—much obliged to your lordship——”

Lord



Lord Kencarth placed the gem upon his finger, and was moving it with dazzling velocity, when he exclaimed,—“ Quiz my nobility, but I must have it! Mind, Topas, I sha’n’t pay you these three months.

“ Three years, my Lord,—and I shall be honoured by your kindness,” replied the obliging Mr. Topas.—“ Thank you, my Lord. I must go and make my excuses to Mrs. Begum, and the long list of nobility who are now waiting to see the diamond. I intreat your lordship not to mention the sum you gave for it: I sent a refusal of an hundred more only yesterday, to a particular friend, but your lordship’s exquisite taste does honour to your tradesmen;—and whatever you wear, my Lord, cannot fail to become the fashion. Hope your lordship will not trust the *bijou*, out of your hands, or suffer it to be played tricks with by  
any

any of the trade.—Thank your lordship—your lordship's most obedient."

Mr. Topas withdrew, and Monsieur Volage, the French opera-dancer, entered the dressing-room.

"Milor," cried the undaunted Volage, "I come to beg your lordship's protection a mon benefice, samedi prochaine a l'opera:—ven I shall give un grand ballet, de most superb and magnifique dat vas ever give in dis country! Toute la noblesse ma promis to come: mais—l'opera vill be noting vidout de presence of Milor Kencat."

"What does he say, Ainsforth?" inquired my pupil—"Disb my wig, if ever I heard such gibberish."

"No understand disb vig," cried Volage. "Je suis tres fache if I have offend milor—mais I have dispose of tree tousand ticket pour mon benefice, von guinea chacun: and I pray milor to take von demi douzaine aussi."

"Well,



"Well, that will do," cried my pupil—"give your tongue a holiday; leave your damme dozen—and go it—budge—be moving."

"No understand!" muttered Monsieur Volage, with his shoulders raised somewhat above his ears, and his countenance ridiculously expressive of astonishment.

"Budge—take yourself off—dash my jasey, but you can hop fast enough at the crotchet shop."

"Jasee! hop!—que veut dire, milor? je n'comprend pas un mot—j'espere que monseigneur vill honneur mon benefice vid his presence," cried Volage.

"Why, I tell you, I'll come. So now stop your gab—and put your pins in motion," said Lord Kencarth.

"No understand!" cried the dancer.

"You may depend on his lordship's patronage," said I; "but he is at pre-

sent

sent particularly engaged, and wishes you to leave him."

"No understand."

"Quiz my caxon! here's a rouleau for your damme dozen," said my pupil.

"Now what say you?"

"Ah! je comprend bien!" cried the delighted Monsieur Volage, making fifty bows and retiring; when my pupil seizing him by the arm, exclaimed, "Dash my scõnce, mounseer, did you ever see a pink diamond? Now, my dainty!—feast your peepers; here's an affair—cost me fifteen hundred guineas not ten minutes ago: there isn't such another in the kingdom—dash my wig if there is."

"Cette une tres joli *bijou*! mais pardonnez moi, monseigneur—it is not brilliant," cried Monsieur Volage."

"That's a good one. Dash my jafey! what a rum judge you must be, not to know a *bijou* from a brilliant."

"En

“*En verité*, milor, it is not diamant,” cried Monsieur Volage.

“Will you pretend to know better than Mr. Topas the jeweller?” said Lord Kencarth. “Dash my wig, if you Frenchmen don’t think to teach the whole universe: but I know that a diamond is a diamond, and queer my caxon if I won’t stand to it, if all the world said to the contrary. So, Mounseer Volage, you may be jogging,—and cut your capers for those that will believe you. Not a diamond!—Dash my jasey, if I would sell it for half my estate—let the other be where it will. Here, Beauvais, shew out Volage,—and shew in somebody else.”

The next person who presented himself was Mr. Pannel the coachmaker.

“I waited on your lordship with a drawing of a new carriage—quite in style, my Lord—very elegant—light as a feather, and totally unlike any thing  
that



that was ever seen before. Your lordship cannot fail to patronize it. I have not shewn the design to any body, till I consulted your lordship's taste," said Mr. Pannel.

"What is it like? Is it the neat thing? Will it beat my tandem? Answer me that, my dainty," cried my pupil.

"My Lord, it is the most perfect thing of the kind that ever was invented! An infant may draw it. It will follow a pair of horses twelve miles an hour with all the ease imaginable. Only observe the construction of the springs, my Lord;—the lightness of the body;—the elegance of the whole carriage. I have not shewn it to a single person, my Lord, for I thought your lordship would like to have the first."

"What do you call it?" said my pupil.

"Why,

“ Why, my Lord—if your lordship will patronize the invention, I shall request your lordship’s permission to call it—*a Kencarth.*”

“ O! dash my jasey, but I’ll have one !” exclaimed his lordship. “ When can you put it in hand ?—how long will it be making ?—what will it cost ?—Dish me, but I gave you two hundred for a phaeton last month, and I have never used it but once ;—you must take it back ;—what will you allow me for it ?”

Mr. Pannel demurred—

“ Fashions change every day, my Lord,” said he, pausing :—“ Phaetons are going out ;—had it been a curricie, I might have found a purchaser ;—but, to accommodate your lordship, I will allow you—fifty guineas, and I shall then be a loser.”

“ What say you, Ainsforth ?” cried my pupil, “ shall I sport a Kencarth, and

and swap my Highflyer for fifty?—  
Queer my caxon, but it will be the  
knowing thing to have a carriage of  
one's own name."

"If your lordship will take my advice, it will be to relinquish the idea," said I. "The drawing seems to promise neither elegance nor utility; it will be an expensive bauble, and you will never use it."

"His lordship's name will give it fashion," said Mr. Pannel.

"You are right, my dainty," cried my pupil; "and dish me, but I'll have one; if only to drive Lady Alltrap about the streets in."

"Indeed, it will be ridiculously singular," said I.

"That's the very reason why I am determined to have it," replied Lord Kencarth. "But heark'ye, my neat Pannel, how do I stand upon your books?—tell me that."

“ Something above four thousand, my Lord; including Lady Alltrap’s landau:—a mere trifle.”

“ Well!—do you want to be paid? tell me that, my trusty?—I can’t give you any money this winter; I must deal all upon tick. I have a little outrun the constable; but shall pick up again next spring.”

Mr. Pannel looked blue.

“ What say you?” cried my pupil, “ tick, and no touch—is that the order of the day, my deep-one?”

“ Your lordship’s credit with me is unbounded,” said Mr. Pannel bowing.

“ The *Kencarth* shall be ready in six weeks.”

“ But you will allow his lordship more than fifty guineas for his phaeton?” said I.

Mr. Pannel again hesitated, and Lord Kencarth whispered, “ D—me, don’t bore upon the subject, lest he should dun me.”

Mr.

Mr. Pannel took his leave, and I left my pupil to receive the rest of his morning visitors, while I strolled towards Lady Aubrey's to inquire after the health of Isabella.

I had not proceeded more than half across the square, when Lord Kencarth's valet-de-chambre, Beauvais, ran after me, and requested that, if I was going to call upon the lady whom I had brought with me in the morning, I would take charge of a medallion which she had left upon the sofa. I examined the trinket; it was encircled with large diamonds, with hair curiously woven, and the letters S. A. in a cypher on the centre. There remained not a doubt in my own mind, but that the hair and initials were Sir Sidney's; the medallion a present from him to Isabella. The sensation which pressed upon my heart was a painful one, and, with more than ordinary agitation, I hastened to Lady

F 2

Aubrey's



Aubrey's to restore the precious pledge of love to the sordid object of my too tender attachment, and to bid her, and her detested lover, adieu for ever!

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CHAP. LXXVII.

I KNOCKED at Lady Aubrey's door, and on giving my name to the servant, he informed me that he had her ladyship's orders to say, she never should be at home to Mr. Ainsforth. I inquired after Miss Hanbury's health, and was answered that she was not yet awake. I left my card for the latter, and my contempt for the former, and was returning home, when, at the end of Brooke-street, I met Sir Sidney.

He hastened towards me, and with a countenance pleased and ingenuous, expressed his joy at once more finding me.

me. "I had rather meet you on terms of friendship in Brooke-street, believe me," said he, "than armed against your life in Hyde Park."

I recollected my last interview with Sir Sidney, and my heart shuddered. He pressed me to return with him. "You must make your peace with my mother," said he; "and, if possible, supplant her new favourite."

"Has Lady Aubrey feeling enough to shew kindness to any thing?" said I smiling.

"The nephew of Mrs. Blagden is now her chief counsellor," cried Sir Sidney; "young Edward Blagden. Indeed so great a favourite is this new *protégée*, that I have some apprehension she means to marry him."

"Is he worthy of her choice?" said I.

"He is young and well-looking," replied Sir Sidney; "just such a fellow

as would captivate a woman's heart before she took the trouble to consult her understanding. But you must return with me, and judge from observation, whether you think either his external graces, or his mental qualities, such as entitle him to Lady Aubrey's favour."

I now informed Sir Sidney of the message which my aunt had left with her servant:—he started. "You know where she resides then?" said he, with evident emotion. "Have you met my mother since her return to town?"

"I have not met Lady Aubrey," was my answer.

"Perhaps," continued Sir Sidney, growing red, and hesitating, "you have seen——Isabella?"

"Even so."

"Lately?" cried my cousin, with increased agitation.

"Last night—or rather this morning."

"Is

“Is it possible!” exclaimed Sir Sidney. “Can woman be so treacherous?—You must have been mistaken—it could not be Isabella. I left her at Lady Amaranth’s; she complained that the heat of a crowded room overcame her: I went home to order my carriage; and, on my return, found that she had taken Mrs. O’Liffy’s chariot and quitted the assembly. Since that moment I have never seen her: it was day-light when I returned to my mother’s house, and I concluded that Isabella was sleeping.”

“She was not sleeping at seven this morning,” said I.

Sir Sidney’s colour changed from red to the paleness of a corpse. “You were certainly mistaken,” cried he; “how was she dressed?—Give me some proof that you saw her. This is a serious business, Walsingham; and my peace of mind is not to be trifled with.”

“She wore a robe of silver muslin,”

said I; "her head was adorned with a plume of white features."

Sir Sidney reeled against a shop window, and taking my hand, faintly articulated—"Since your better genius has prevailed, I can only wish you happy, and bid you farewell for ever. I hoped, Walsingham, that time, and my regard for Isabella, would have alienated your affections, and secured her friendship; as it is, Heaven bless you!"

His manner was mournfully impressive; his cheek and lip were as white as marble. I stood like a statue, without power to answer him: he walked slowly along the pavement towards Bond-street.

Thinking that I had carried the jest beyond the bounds of humanity, I followed my cousin till he reached Pall Mall. He stopped at the Cocoa-tree, and desired a waiter to order a post-chaise and four to be got ready as speedily



speedily as possible. He did not observe me, though I stood not ten paces from him. Having dispatched the messenger, he entered the house. I paused a moment to consider what step was most advisable to take, when a thought darted across my brain that, probably, he meditated suicide. I entered the coffee-room;—he was not there. I inquired of the waiter where he was, and he informed me that Sir Sidney had called for pen, ink, and paper, and was shewn into a private drawing-room. “Tell him that Mr. Ainsforth wishes to see him,” said I.

The waiter flew to deliver my message, and I thought every moment an age till he brought back the answer, which was, that “Sir Sidney Aubrey, being particularly engaged, could not then see me.”

Determined not to take a refusal, I desired the waiter to shew me the room

where Sir Sidney was, and he instantly obeying, I entered without ceremony. My cousin rose abruptly from his seat, and hastily exclaimed—"By Heaven, Walsingham, this persecution is insupportable!—Is there no spot upon the habitable globe where I can hope for rest?—What do you wish? Are you determined to destroy me? Will nothing less than my destruction satisfy your revenge?—Oh, God!" continued Sir Sidney, "a few weeks, a few short weeks, would have elucidated every mystery!—But Fate has interposed, and I resign myself to wretchedness."

"Then, at last, you experience a small portion of the anguish which, for months, you have made me suffer," said I. "But, to convince you that I am less obstinate in malice than you have been in persecution, I will confess, that——"

"What?"

"What?" cried Sir Sidney eagerly. "Speak!—my brain is burning with the fever of despair. Oh, Walsingham! ungenerous Walsingham! what a deceitful fiend is Isabella!—Only three days since she avowed her passion for another, and now, to torture me, she makes you the dupe of her deception."

"Whom did she avow to love?" said I earnestly.

Sir Sidney smiled. "It is of little importance," answered he; "the triumph is yours, and the humiliation will follow as certain as that the night succeeds the day. I shall not live to see it—thank Heaven I shall not."

"I conjure you, tell me to whom Isabella has transferred her affections?" said I.

"I do not comprehend the term," replied my cousin. "Affections cannot be transferred that never yet were fixed."

“ Then Isabella is doubly criminal,” interrupted I; “ for the woman who bestows her person, where she can withhold her heart, is the most culpable of beings: the venal wanton is not more guilty.—But this is trifling.—You, who were the seducer of Isabella, should be the last to calumniate her name. From you she is entitled to protection; and that slander, which fails to depreciate her merit, stigmatizes you as the most infamous of mortals.”

Sir Sidney walked hastily about the room, gnawing his lip, and looking like a maniac. I continued:—

“ From this hour, Sir Sidney, we must part for ever;—I was born to hate you. From the early days of infancy, your very name has been the bane of my repose; in every path of still retirement, your malice crossed me. I flew to the busy scenes of life; thither you traced my footsteps. The solitudes  
of

of mountains, and the crowds of cities, have been explored in vain; your persecuting spirit still pursued its victim, and my native country can afford no shelter from the tyranny of your malevolence:—I shall therefore fly. In a few days I shall depart for the Continent.”

Sir Sidney threw himself into a chair, and fixing his eyes in wildness on the ground, made me no answer. I proceeded:—

“ Fortune has placed you on an eminence which enables you to look down on persecuted individuals——”

“ Oh! curse my fortune!” interrupted Sir Sidney. “ Take, take it, Walsingham: I shall not want it long!—You will remember me with regret, your heart will ache with compunction, when I shall be in the grave, and tranquil. But whatever your inhuman malice may suggest—whether to evince your triumph, or to stigmatize my memory—



mory—I charge you, if honour is yet dear to man, or pity due to a weak, foolish, erring woman, guard, oh! guard, and respect the misguided Isabella.”

“ She shall have my pity,” answered I; “ and, unquestionably, the world will allow her all the respect which is due to the mistress of Sir Sidney Aubrey.”

“ She never was my mistress. By all my hopes of happiness beyond the grave, I swear that Isabella *never* was my mistress,” replied Sir Sidney. “ Time will develop the dark mystery; for the fates alone can unravel that clue which will lead the angel, Pity, to the grave of the ill-fated Sidney.”

He burst into tears, and wept like a woman: every drop he shed augmented my jealousy, and strengthened my determination to punish Isabella. After a pause of several minutes I approached my cousin, and drawing the medallion from my pocket, presented it to him.

## CHAP. LXXVIII.

SIR Sidney snatched the medallion from my hand, dashed it on the floor;—and rising abruptly, darted out of the room. The glass which covered the initials was shattered into a thousand pieces;—the cypher broken, and several of the brilliants unset by the violence with which they struck the ground. This unlucky event involved me in a new dilemma. I could not return the medallion to Miss Hanbury, so defaced; and to keep it would be unpardonable. There was no way of accounting for the accident, but by telling the truth;—and even that would subject me not only to her contempt, but her reproaches. After a pause of some minutes, which I devoted to reflection, I determined to wait on Isabella, to restore the medallion, and  
to

to confess every circumstance of the transaction.

I immediately set out for Brookstreet, and on the door being opened, the first person I saw was Mrs. Blagden. The grim visage of a fury would have been personified meekness, in comparison with the features of my ancient antagonist. I requested to speak with Miss Hanbury. Mrs. Blagden informed me that there was no such person in the house. I entered the parlour, and Mrs. Blagden followed. "What do you want?" said she peevishly. "My lady has long since determined never to see you more, therefore you only lose your time in pestering her ladyship. Besides, I wonder at your assurance to enter these doors while I am here:—you ought to recollect how you always behaved to me, and how basely you attempted to murder Sir Sidney."

"I wish

"I wish to see Miss Hanbury," said I.

"Miss Hanbury is no company for you, I tell you once more," cried the harpy Blagden. "There is not a lord in the land, who would not be proud to marry my lady and Miss Hanbury too. Indeed, if I don't mistake, my lady will not be a widow long. I am sure I shall advise her to take a husband, if only to get rid of her beggarly relations."

"Can I see Miss Hanbury?" repeated I.

Mrs. Blagden paid no regard to my question, but throwing herself into a chair, continued:—

"My lady has found a person at last, thank God! who will know how to value her kindness.—A young man, and as handsome a one too as ever wore a head;—and not a vagrant neither; for he shall have all my savings, and I can  
give

give him a few thousands, though you have been pleased to turn up your nose at me. All my life have I been toiling and slaving like a negro, and got no thanks neither. But my lady has at last found out who are her friends, and who are her foes;—and my nephew, Edward Blagden, will do honour to her ladyship's taste,—and reward me for all the ill usage I have met with.”

“ Can I speak with Miss Hanbury ?” said I.

“ And as for Sir Sidney, I don't care a pin,” cried Mrs. Blagden, with a malicious sneer. “ He is no better than he should be ;—but it will all come out ;—my nephew Edward will set things to rights, I'll warrant you. He won't be put upon, as I have been. And as for you, and your good-for-nothing tutor Mr. Hanbury, my nephew Edward shall give you both a sound drubbing, if you



play off any more of your tricks upon me or my lady. I know what you have been at;—I heard of your killing the poor woman, and robbing the lady;—and for half a farthing I would tell all the world how you attempted to break open my lady's cabinet, and to shoot Sir Sidney."

I smiled.

"You may shew your teeth, and outface it, Mister Impudence," continued Mrs. Blagden; "but time will bring all things to light, and you will then laugh the wrong side of your mouth, Mister Brazenface:—and if you don't make the best of your way out of my lady's house, I shall send for a constable, and shew you who is mistress here, Mister Vagabond."

"When you have wearied that brawling tongue of yours, I will beg you to take a message for me to Miss Hanbury," said I.

Mrs.

Mrs. Blagden bounded from her seat, and advancing towards me, like a she-dragon, vociferated—

“ *I* carry a message!—*I* be your lacquey!—I wonder at your insolence. I wish my nephew was here to give you your deserts, you frightful ugly jackanapes!—But I sha’n’t stand here wasting my breath;—I shall make you know that I am my lady’s best friend, and the mistress of this house, at least.” So saying, she rung the bell violently. A servant entered. “Here, Andrew,” cried she, “turn this fellow out of doors. You had orders never to admit him, and I wonder at you for disobeying my lady’s commands.”

“My honest friend,” said I, perceiving the embarrassment which Mrs. Blagden’s extraordinary request occasioned, “you need not trouble yourself, nor offend me. I am little inclined to bear an insult: my mind is not easily quieted  
when

when I am once roused to exert it. I only wish to speak five words with Miss Hanbury;—will you convey my message to her?"

"At your peril!—at your peril, I say!" vociferated Mrs. Blagden.

"You need na be sae clamorous; I shan'na take part with either, till I ken baith sides o'th' business," replied Andrew, taking out his leathern snuff-box, and viewing me attentively.

"Turn him out!" vociferated Mrs. Blagden.

"I shall do na sic thing," cried the honest North-Briton. "The lad's a braw lad, an I wad be laith to do an ill turn by sic a faire spaken gentleman. An a' were a faucy loon, like some that I ken i'th' world, I canna say how fare the blude o'th' Mac-Gregors—"

"Will you obey my orders, or will you not, you idle gossiping old block-head?" cried Mrs. Blagden.

"You

"You need na be fae hafty!" cried Andrew; "I say nathing but gude sense and gude discretion. The lad's a bonie lad!—an I were sure to be made the first of my ancestors, I wou'd na be sic a cauld-hearted loon as to meddle with a hair o' his hede. I wad be laith to disgrace my famely, by forgetting what is due to humanity."

"Will you dare disobey my commands, you drawling old driveller?" cried Mrs. Blagden. "I shall tell my lady how you behave yourself; and this house shall no longer harbour people who will not do their duty."

"Gude troth, an you come to that, 'tis na I that am to blame i'th' matter," replied old Andrew. "I canna bring mysel to shame, an take up the trade of a cauld-bluded loon, for any Zantippe i'th' lond. An you want a graceless lubber you munna take a Mac-Gregor, —I can tell you that."

"O! you

“ O! you saucy mountaineer! you oatmeal vagabond!” exclaimed Mrs. Blagden. “ Go back to your land of thistles, you impudent varlet you!”

“ Gang your ways, for a crabbed auld cat-a-murrain!” cried the indignant Andrew. “ Why you munna think to flout a North Breton; and yet haud your hede as high as your betters. By my sol, an I’d as soon lead the de’il a daunce as far as John o’ Groats, as follow the whimsies of sic an auld bead-lamite! Gude troth, I’ll e’en jog bock to the Highlands,—and the de’il tack the whole pack o’ ye all together: for sic a set never turned the hede of a Scot since the gude days o’ Saint Andrew!”

“ You’ll give me a good character, I warrant you!” cried Mrs. Blagden.

“ I canna gi you any thing you’re mair in want of: and e’faith I winna stint you o’ that,” replied Andrew.

“ Can



“ Can I speak with Miss Hanbury ?”  
said I.

“ In gude faith an you can, if you  
han’na lost the use o’ your tongue,”  
answered Andrew. “ Mistress Isabelle  
is na fi cauld-hearted as this auld scarea-  
mouch, saving your presence. . . I should  
be laith to turn my back upon a weel-  
spoken lassie ; though I would gang as  
fare as the Anteepestodes to get quit o’ sic  
an auld hagard !—But I winna disgrace  
my speech ;—for it is na for the honour  
o’ my famely to throw dirt with a cheeld  
o’th’ deevil !”

“ Can I see Miss Hanbury ?” cried I,  
somewhat impatiently.

“ That depends o’ the gudeness o’ your  
fight, mon,” replied Andrew : “ In  
troth, an you winna set your eyn on sic a  
bonie lassie for many a long day, unless  
you tack a journey to the High-  
lands.”

I now

I now wrote my name on a scrap of paper, and delivered it to the honest-hearted Andrew, who instantly quitted the parlour, and left me with Mrs. Blagden.

Again a volley of invective flowed from the never-tiring tongue of my ancient assailant; and the philosophic scorn from which I determined not to deviate, rather increased than suppressed the torrent of her resentment. Seated opposite to my furious and inexorable enemy, I fixed my gaze upon her without uttering a syllable, while with rage nearly approaching to frenzy, she renewed the wordy combat, and exclaimed, as her cheek grew pale and her eyes seemed to flash the fires of indignation, "You audacious fellow you—how dare you set foot within my lady's doors? But this house will soon have a master, thank my stars! one that will not suffer either I or my lady to be insulted and put upon by

any beggar's brat in the universe. You are just like your mother—she was as impudent as a highwayman's horse, and as ugly too—and when your father preferred her to me, and married a beggarly dependant of my old lady's, all the world cried Shame! so they did—for there was not a trer looking woman within a hundred miles of Glenowen than I was, and that the whole universe can testify.—But the chaplain, forsooth, looked over my head, when other folks came to take place of their betters—and all the world said that he deserved to have his gown stripped off his shoulders for his pains, an impudent, ungrateful vagabond!”

“Rail on,” said I; “the dead cannot hear, and the living despise thy malice.”

“Despise!” vociferated Mrs. Blagden—“Despise yourself, or mend your manners. My nephew Edward is your master,

master, I can promise you—He has a handsome, genteel, noble presence, like a prince—and ten good thousand pounds in his pocket, my honest savings. Shew me your rent-roll, Mister Mumper; tell me where your fortune is to come from; you shan't have a pin's point of my lady's property. I would out with all I know, if it ruined her and myself into the bargain, rather than see you master of a stick belonging to Glen-owen."

"Thank you, amiable lady!" said I, rising and making a low bow.—She continued—

"My lady minds nobody but me.—I can make her do any thing; and before I am a month older she shall marry my nephew Edward Blagden, or I am not living. You may take your leave of the family—your triumph is nearly expired—you may look for new friends to make fools of; Mr. Hanbury has

done with you—I took care to settle that business.

Miss Hanbury's suspicions concerning my letters were confirmed by this unguarded confession of Mrs. Blagden's, and I could not refrain from exclaiming, "Infamous harpy!" At this moment Andrew returned.

"Gude troth, lad," said he with a sorrowful countenance, "the lassie winna gi ye audience; she canna think o' hauding converse wi a person that is na friend o' my lady's. But she bade me tell you that she has na ill blude towards you, and that she wishes you mickle good wherever you wander. I'faith, an I were i'the Highlands you should na want for a hame to put your hede in; though this auld harradan has given you such a deevil of a dressing. Oh! an you cou'd haundle the bagpipes, like some braw lairds that I ken o'the other side the Tweed, you need na be dangling after this lassie and t'other; au the world wou'd follow



follow ye, and auld Andrew into the bargain."

"Will you inform Miss Hanbury that I bring intelligence from Sir Sidney Aubrey?" said I.

"Gude faith will I; an I warrant she winna haud out much longer," replied old Andrew. "I should be laith to make her angry wi me; but since you come fra Sir Sidney, I'll e'en venture. An now I cau it to mind, I think it was you, lad, that brought the lassie safe hame this morning."

"Brought the lady safe home this morning!" repeated Mrs. Blagden, with wide-stretched eyes of wonder and suspicion. "Pretty doings! out all night nobody knows where, and brought home at seven in the morning by nobody knows whom. Fine conduct, truly! But my lady shall know it—all the world shall know it; and that canting, preaching, sneering vagabond, Walter Hanbury,

bury, shall hear what a prudent sister he has got—and Sir Sidney shall be told what a fine friend he has chosen to keep company with ;—and you, old Mister Pimp, you sat up to open the door, forsooth!”

“ Maister Pemp! Gad’s blude, you faucy auld deevil you.—The murrain tak your assurance. If there is a pemp i’ the family, ’tis na Andrew Mac-Gregor. Look to your aine beggar’s bairne, and do na cau names, lest you bring an auld hoose about your ears,” cried the honest Scot, while his face became scarlet with the indignation of insulted honour.

“ I know nothing about beggars and barns,” replied Mrs. Blagden.

“ Nane so deaf as those that winna hear!” added Andrew: “ but sin you tak upon you to caw names, and to affront the honour o’ my famely, I shanna put up wi your impudence any longer; the de’il a bit do I care for the whole  
clan

clan of you, though you were as auncient as the flude. An sin you make me speak, I'll tell au I ken o'the matter."

"Scandalize my lady if you dare, you saucy varlet," cried Mrs. Blagden.

Andrew continued—

"Wha let the lad wi the de'il's name into the hoose, when au the famely were sleeping, Mestress Jeezebel? Wha promised to make a laird o' a loon, that is na fit to clean the shoes of a Mac-Gregor? And wha said that Sir Sidney was na maire my lady's son than a was his majesty's?"

"O you villain! you scurrilous old mischief-maker! I never uttered such a word," exclaimed Mrs. Blagden.

"By my sol, but you did; an you told your cousin-jarman, Maister Edward, the same story. You canna stop my tongue, sin you have attacked my honour, and sin you tak upon you to govern the famely; I winna stint you of gude

counsel; it costs me naithing, an your kindly welcome."

Andrew now quitted the room once more, to convey my message, and I waited impatiently for Isabella's answer. He returned, and brought me word that Miss Hanbury would see me in half an hour.

I was ushered into the drawing-room. Pens, ink, and paper lay on the table, and to beguile the tedious moments, I scribbled the following little

#### MADRIGAL.

Oh ! sad and watchful waits thy lover,  
Whose fate depends upon a smile,  
Who counts the weary minutes over,  
And chides his flutt'ring heart the while.  
Who, as the zephyrs, softly blowing,  
From drooping flow'rets shake the dew,  
While down his cheek the tear is flowing,  
Sweet rose of beauty ! sighs for you.

Oh !

Oh! proud and madd'ning is the pleasure,  
 When to my eyes thy form appears;  
 All drest in Nature's winning treasure  
 Of blushing hopes and graceful fears.  
 And while our bosoms wildly beating,  
 A thousand nameless raptures prove;  
 Our eyes in speechless transport meeting,  
 Shall love to gaze, and gaze to love!

Then, Rose of beauty, haste and cheer me,  
 With lips like rubies come, and smile;  
 Ah! trust my faith, and do not fear me,  
 I love too fondly to beguile!  
 The false and cunning may allure thee,  
 And win thee only to betray:  
 I would not, lady, so secure thee,  
 Nor wear thy favours for a day.

Then come and bless me, Nature's treasure!  
 Oh! come, and bid my sorrows fly;  
 Instruct my heart to throb with pleasure,  
 Or bid me cease to hope, and die!  
 And, Rose of beauty, since thy lover  
 For thee a thousand lives would give,  
 One grateful thought at least discover,  
 One tender sigh to bid him *live*!



## CHAP. LXXIX.

As I finished the last stanza, Isabella entered the room. There was a cast of tender melancholy in her countenance that touched my heart; her eyes were still humid with tears, and every feature bore evident signs of more than ordinary sorrow. "Walsingham," said she, with a mild and impressive tone, "you will be surprised when I inform you of the change which is about to take place in Lady Aubrey's family:—your aunt, in a few days, will be the wife of Edward Blagden. By the artifice of your ancient enemy, Sir Sidney is estranged from the bosom of his mother, and the long-buried mystery of his birth must at last be unravelled."

"You awaken my curiosity;—for Heaven's sake be explicit," said I.

"Alas,

"Alas, Walsingham! I dare not," replied Isabella. "I am sworn to secrecy; my aching heart throbs while I recollect the awful vow which I can never break: but that detested fiend, Mrs. Blagden, will shortly elucidate the whole business. Jealous of Lady Aubrey's kindness to me, and anxious to promote her nephew's interest, by a marriage with her too credulous mistress, the secret, which has been held inviolate since the birth of Sir Sidney, cannot fail to transpire. Poor Sidney!—the most amiable, the most generous of mortals."

She burst into an agony of tears, and for several minutes was incapable of speaking.

"Who is Sir Sidney?—Is he not the child of Lady Aubrey? the heir of Sir Edward?" said I.

"The ill-fated Sidney is the child of Lady Aubrey," replied Miss Hanbury.

"But, with the prospect of humiliation which now presents itself, it would have been better he had never known that title; his days have been a scene of sorrow, and, I fear, his last sad hour will close in anguish."

Again she wept abundantly.

"Was not Sir Edward the father of Sir Sidney?" inquired I earnestly.

"He was; and had he lived, your cousin had been happy."

"You distract me with a thousand doubts and apprehensions," said I.

"Why should Lady Aubrey's marriage confirm my cousin's misery? Does his every hope of happiness depend on her?"

"Oh no," replied Miss Hanbury.

"There lives another being who will command the fate of Sidney Aubrey."

"A woman?"

"No—a man; the most deserving, the most enlightened of men," answered Isabella.

"Mer-

"Merciful God! you cannot mean your brother?" said I.

Miss Hanbury shook her head, and sighed; but made no answer.

"I have something to communicate respecting Sir Sidney," said I, "and yet I know not how to tell you—that——"

Isabella rested on my shoulder, and trembled in every limb.

"Have a care," said she; "my heart is already overpowered with pity. I have too long watched the progress of your cousin's sorrows not to tremble at the idea of their accumulation; he has been the slave of his mother's false ambition. Heaven forbid that I should ever live to say—the victim!—He knows not that a storm is gathering round him which will bend his generous bosom to the grave."

"I have seen Sir Sidney," said I.

"When?"

"This

"This morning—not two hours since."

Isabella scarcely breathed.

"Happy, happy Sidney! to be so adored," said I. "All the ills of life, all the vicissitudes of fortune, will pass lightly over a bosom which has such sweet participation."

"Walsingham!" interrupted Isabella, "yet have a little patience; it is not on me that Sir Sidney's fate depends. Had I the power to sooth his sorrows, I call Heaven to witness how joyfully I would undertake the task. But the affections of the heart must find a poor and feeble solace in the sympathies of friendship, while hope presents no gleam of peace, no dawn of consolation."

She paused a few moments, and then continued—

"You say that you have seen Sir Sidney?"

"Not



"Not long since—I met him by accident."

"And why did he not accompany you hither?" said Isabella.

"I did not think to make this visit," answered I; "but I have something in my possession which belongs to you: indeed so defaced, that I tremble to present it."

I now took the medallion from my pocket. Miss Hanbury looked at it, and smiled. "I thought I had lost it last night at Lady Amaranth's; the accident is trifling: make no apologies, I conjure you. Where did you find it?"

"You left it at Lady Kencarth's this morning," said I; "but it was then perfect. You will forgive the fault, when you know that it was committed by Sir Sidney."

"By accident?" inquired Isabella, half smiling.

"I can-

"I cannot even add that extenuation of his folly," said I, "nor can I account for your indifference on the subject. But you, Isabella, have lived in the unfeeling world long enough to steel your heart against the mild affections:—a lover's gift is easily replaced—by a new lover."

"Are you frantic?" cried Miss Hambury hastily. "Will you never hear reason, and act like a thinking mortal?—I conjure you only to have patience till your cousin is of age, and all shall be explained for your repose, Sir Sidney's happiness, and my reputation. As for the last—believe me, Walsingham, when I declare, that you, who ought to be the first to credit my assertion, are the only being upon earth that suspects me of dishonour."

"The only honest friend who dares tell you what the world's conjectures buz abroad," said I. "You are the  
9  
reputed

reputed mistress of Sir Sidney Aubrey. But romantic fondness can brave the opinions of mankind, and wrapped up in fancied security, set fame and reason at defiance. Pardon me, Isabella, if the last words I utter in your presence compose the admonition of a friend; the language of esteem, the unvarnished declaration of truth, growing from affection, and struggling with resentment."

"Resentment!—Oh Heaven!" cried Isabella, "in what instance have I merited resentment from you—my earliest friend, the associate of my childhood? You, who ought to know my heart, and to judge it with more lenity: I have ever loved you as a brother."

"Would to God my affection had been of that cold and tranquil nature which might suit a brother's bosom!" said I; "but I was deceived. I thought that the delights of infancy, the growing sympathy of minds, the rich and  
pure

pure congeniality of soul which marked our earliest hours, would ripen into something more than friendship."

"Then you deceived yourself," cried Isabella; "your virtues, your attachment charmed my mind, but never touched my heart. I have not deceived you, Walsingham.—I have never entertained a thought beyond the intercourse of friendship; and even at this moment, when I have no wish, no reason to dissemble, I frankly own that my heart is devoted to—"

"Sir Sidney Aubrey?" interrupted I.

"No, not to him, by all my hopes of happiness!" replied Isabella; "it is impossible that I ever should be the wife of your unfortunate cousin; though every moment of my life should be joyfully dedicated to the task of friendship, could such attentions in the smallest degree alleviate his sorrows."

At

At this moment honest Andrew entered the room. "Gude troth, an you must part," said he; "the auld deevil is caballing with my lady, and storming like a witch o' a windy night. I should be laith to ge the vaxin her way, and see the braw lad turned into the street like a beggar's bairne, to please her deev'lish whamsies;—you had better tak my counsel, and gang your gait quietly."

"I will go instantly," said I.

"Indeed, Walsingham, you will act wisely in departing," cried Isabella;—"the tyranny of Mrs. Blagden beneath this roof is insupportable; there is no outrage which she is not capable of planning—no insult which her malice would not put in practice; but her hour of rapacity draws near to a conclusion; for Lady Aubrey's income, when Sir Sidney comes of age, will be diminished;—the sum of six thousand pounds, annually allowed for his board and education,



tion, will from that moment cease to be paid; and his fate or fortune will then excite little interest in either Mrs. Blagden's mind, or that of his unfeeling mother."

"He will be placed by fortune above their machinations," said I.

Isabella shook her head, and faintly articulated "I fear he will be wretched!"

We now heard Mrs. Blagden's voice—Andrew renewed his intreaties that I would be gone—and, to avoid altercation, I consented.

"You shall see or hear from me again very soon," said Isabella. As I quitted the drawing-room she added—"Remember poor Sidney! endeavour to think kindly of him, to respect his virtues, and to pity his misfortunes!"

I had a thousand things to say—a thousand questions to ask; but the clamorous fury approached—Andrew trembled,

bled, and Isabella conjured me to be gone; therefore, after a short struggle betwixt prudence and inclination, I kissed her hand, and departed.

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## CHAP. LXXX.

I RETURNED to Hanover-square, where I found a large party assembled to dinner; among others it was again my misfortune to meet the Duke of Heartwing.—Our greeting was mutually cold and ceremonious; his Grace's pride and my contempt seemed destined to hold a perpetual contest; he determined to demand as I to deny that homage, which too often debases human nature. Lord Kencarth was in high spirits, and repeatedly announced to his guests that the party

party was made for the purpose of 'seasoning his tutor.'

I observed the Duke frequently looking at me with an eye of suspicion, which I as regularly encountered with the firm gaze of conscious rectitude. As soon as the dessert was placed on the table, with a profusion of wines that would have tempted the palate of a Mussulman, the Duke, with a supercilious tone, drank to the improvement of my pupil's morality.

Doctor Pimpernel, who was also of the party, seconded the toast with the promptitude of adulation—"Your Grace is a most profound observer of human nature!" cried the Doctor, filling his glass; "and with your experience, what cannot be accomplished?"

"Queer my nobility, if I don't beat dukey out and out!" said Lord Ken-carth; "what can he do?—when he was educated, nobody knew any thing that was worth learning. Dish my sconce, if I  
don't

don't match all the old school, at any game they will mention, and my tutor shall be judge."

"Is your tutor competent to the task?" interrupted his Grace.

"Competent! dath my jasey, he is equal to any thing," replied his lordship: "why he shall make love with your Grace, or talk Latin with the Doctor, for five hundred, play or pay, quiz my learning if he shan't."

The Doctor hemmed and rubbed his forehead; the Duke smiled contemptuously.

"How can we bring your tutor's superiority to the proof?" said his Grace.

"O! nothing more easy," replied my pupil—"I'll bet you a thousand that he is married before your Grace."

"I shall not make the trial," said I.

"Will your lordship take the bet yourself?" cried the Duke. "Nay, I'll add four times the sum, and allow you ten days to make the experiment."

The

The Doctor nodded significantly; his Grace, encouraged by the signal, continued—

“What! my Lord! will you suffer your inexhaustible store of new knowledge to be challenged and surpassed by one of the old school?”

Lord Kencarth was evidently piqued by the taunting manner in which his Grace addressed him.——“Dish my sconce,” said he, “if I have not a great mind to make the bet—but the sum is too trifling—it will not pay the parson and buy my wife’s court gown; dash my jasey, make it ten thousand guineas, and I’ll take it.”

“Done, for ten thousand,” said the Duke, “and the period allowed to decide the bet just ten days.”

My pupil agreed to the terms, and the bottle went round, as a new flow of animation seemed to warm every bosom,



bosom, except mine, which was almost petrified by astonishment.

"I'll bet you another thousand," cried Doctor Pimpernel, addressing my pupil, "that his Grace wins your money."

"I take it," said Lord Kencarth; "for dish my nobility, but I have a nice girl in my eye, who will have no objection to wear the ermine,—a little rustic with all the graces of a court; and queer my caxon, if she won't have me, I'll marry my old woman, and do the thing in style."

"Well," cried the Doctor, "this will be a busy week: with his Grace's person and transcendent perfections of mind, he cannot fail to win the wager: for that woman must be senseless indeed, who had not taste to idolize the one and to pay homage to the other."

The whole circle roared with laughter—his Grace looked disconcerted—the Doctor hemmed.

Lord Kencarth interrupted the clamorous mirth with "Quiz me, but Pimpernel's a deep one, for he has said the very same thing to me at least an hundred times."

"His Grace's pretensions require no comment!" continued the Doctor; "the form of Hercules! the front of Jove himself! an eye——"

Again the table roared.

"Damme!" cried the Duke, "I see nothing to laugh at. Pray, Sir," addressing me, "can you explain the cause of this boisterous merriment?"

"The cause is evident, my Lord Duke," said I.

"Curse me, if I know the subject of their mirth," continued his Grace.

"I always believed as much," said I, gravely.

The bottle went round till near eleven o'clock, when coffee was ordered, and the duke proposed adjourning to a ball at the Duchess of Riversford's. The carriages were

were at the door, and we departed. I would have excused myself, by informing Lord Kencarth that the Duchess and I were not even upon speaking terms.

“Pshaw! don’t mind that,” cried my pupil; “we never go to people’s houses because we like them; you need not speak to the Duchess; her doors are open to every body, and we go thither to be amused. Who cares for the hostess?—Dish my jasey, but you must do the right thing, however your inclinations may lead to the contrary.”

Still I endeavoured to excuse myself, and still my pupil would take no denial.

“You cannot refuse,” said he;—“you’ll find all sorts of sports going forward; you will not want for amusement, my hearty. Besides, I shall want you particularly this evening—I have something important to do, and you must assist me.—So, dish my nobility, tutor, but you must go.”

Again I positively refused to accompany his lordship—he continued—

“All the world will be there; and the Duchess informed me this morning, that she had invited the Welsh family of the Aubreys. I am told that the visitor is looking for her match—who knows, my hearty, but I may get her to have me, and so dish the old duke for ten thousand without farther trouble.”

The idea in an instant vanquished all my scruples, and, without further hesitation, I accompanied my pupil to the Duchess of Riversford's.

## CHAP. LXXXI.

I FOUND all my old fashionable friends, with a considerable augmentation of new faces. Lady Aubrey's party was not yet come; and with watchful impatience I waited for her arrival. Doctor Pimpernel evinced his qualification as master of the ceremonies, and every couple seemed satisfied with his judicious arrangements. Though I was never fond of dancing, I could not refuse when challenged by the lively and charming Lady Arabella, who, amidst the gay and splendid throng, was the only person that condescended to recollect me.

We had scarcely gone down one dance, when Lady Aubrey, Isabella, and Sir Sidney entered. My heart throbbed with a variety of sensations, while I anti-



cipated events that would probably occur during the evening.—I have seldom found my presentiment erroneous, and therefore considered the impression of that moment as the sure prognostic of what really happened.

Lady Aubrey had been only a few minutes in the room, when my unlucky form met her eyes.—Her countenance betrayed a mixture of astonishment and indignation, which was evident, not only to my partner, but to every person that stood near us. She fixed her stern gaze upon me, and followed me down the dance with persecuting malignity. When I came to the lower end of the room, I observed her in close conversation with Isabella, and distinctly heard her say, “I command you, Miss Hanbury, not to take any notice of the abandoned profligate—He has sufficiently disgraced his family and connections already.”

I smiled.—

I smiled.—Miss Hanbury was overwhelmed with confusion.—Sir Sidney sat on a sofa, so sorrowfully pensive, that he seemed alone in the busy circle, and wholly inattentive to the surrounding scene of animation.

Isabella had not been long in the room when she attracted the notice of the Duke of Heartwing. His attention was instantly fixed, and they entered into conversation, at once easy and familiar. The Duchess encouraged the gallantry of his Grace; and Isabella did not seem displeased with the marked admiration which her personal graces evidently excited. I watched Sir Sidney's countenance;—it betrayed not the smallest emotion;—there was no symptom of fear; no flush of jealous inquietude. All the coquetry of Isabella, all the assiduity of the Duke, passed before his eyes unnoticed, and I was at a loss to comprehend the meaning of his apathy.

Lady Arabella proposed resting, and I was not sorry to embrace an opportunity of conversing with my pupil, who had several times during the dance made signals of impatience to speak with me.

As soon as I could with propriety leave Lady Arabella, I retired to a small card-room with Lord Kencarth, who, taking me by the arm, desired, without ceremony, that I would convey a message from him to Isabella.—“Dish my nobility, tutor,” said he, “if I won’t have her! She is quite the thing, my hearty, and seems upon the look-out for a husband: queer me, if I don’t hate the idea of a long courtship; so do you go and tell her, that, dash my wig if I don’t marry her to-morrow morning.”

“Marry Miss Hanbury!” said I, with astonishment, which I could not conceal.

“Why not?” cried his lordship; “she’s a nice girl, and I shall get the Duke’s

Duke's ten thousand by the bargain. Queer my sponce, but I must win my bet at all events, and I think I cannot act wiser than to take the little Welsh girl off the hands of her dragon, Lady Aubrey:—so, tutor, do you go and tell her so, while I wait here for her answer, and don't stay prosing about it, lest I should alter my mind."

"The proposal would come with more propriety from yourself," said I; "making love by proxy is so perfectly absurd, that I should be the butt of eternal ridicule. You must plead your own cause, if you hope to succeed."

"Dash me, but I'm not up to it," replied my pupil. "I never yet had courage to talk about a parson. I can't make love—quiz me if I can—and for that reason I have always sported an old girl of fashion;—they save one the trouble, you know. But this is losing time," continued his lordship; "there's Heart-

wing close at her elbow;—he'll nab the little one if I don't keep a good look-out;—and so chouse me out of a wife and ten thousand into the bargain."

"Will you marry a woman to whom you are entirely a stranger?" said I.

"Why not?" cried my pupil. "Dish my jasey if it is not the only way. I sha'n't know her bad qualities, and her good ones will the more surprise me. Besides, I am seldom twelve hours in the same mind;—and she that takes me, must catch me when she can, queer my nobility:—I'm not one of your dangles;—I can't wait for a girl till she is old enough to be a grandmother, and then make her a lady to prove myself a fool. So take my message, and let's have no profling about it."

At this instant the Duke of Heartwing entered the card-room. There was a smile of triumph on his countenance, that bespoke a mind perfectly satisfied



tisfied with its prospects of success:—  
“How do you feel about your bet?”  
said his Grace, addressing my pupil;  
“will you give five thousand to be off?  
You had better accept the proposal, for  
it is the last time I shall make it.”

“Not a guinea, by all that is quizzical:—dish me, but I’d marry the witch of Endor, rather than lose my wager,”  
replied his lordship.

The Duke smiled.

Lady Aubrey and Miss Hanbury interrupted the conversation, and I went in search of Lady Arabella, happy to escape from the importunities of my eccentric pupil.

I found my pretty partner in close conversation with Sir Sidney Aubrey. On seeing me she quitted her seat, and, with some embarrassment, inquired why I had so ungallantly deserted her. “Indeed,” said she, with an arch smile, which contradicted the impressive mild-

ness of her voice, "you are an unpardonable truant. But you philosophers are monstrously savage, and wonderfully apt to desert those who are most fond of your society. Your amiable cousin is not so pedantic;—he has been saying all sorts of civil things to me; and if you do not take care, he will become a great favourite, I assure you."

"My cousin is a universal lover," said I. "A lady's favours are little valued by one of so changeable a nature."

"I deny the charge," cried Sir Sidney. "Heaven knows, that my heart is incapable of changing."

"I told you so," interrupted Lady Arabella, "and it was vastly presumptuous in you to dispute my opinion. Did you not confess to me that you were in love to distraction?" continued her ladyship, addressing my cousin.

"I plead

"I plead guilty," replied Sir Sidney.

Lady Arabella's eyes sparkled with conscious victory:—"Well," said she, giving Sir Sidney's arm a gentle tap with her fan; "you are a charming creature, in spite of all your melancholy humours; and if I were not an admirer of a certain marble-hearted pedant, that shall be nameless, I should like vastly to fall in love with you."

My cousin bowed; and I scarcely knew how to interpret her declaration.

Lady Arabella again rallied me on my gravity of manners:—"I protest, you are perfectly savage!" cried she; "you will destroy the charming vivacity of your pupil, if you set him so freezing an example; and in another winter, he will be fit for nothing but to study Greek, and give lectures on philosophy. A few such ice-plants would chill the whole parterre of fashionable life; and not a flower

flower would be seen to lift its head, from the venerable Amaranth, to the ‘Rose of beauty’—that somebody has so tunefully celebrated!—For, there are moments, when the most frigid bosoms confess a glow of animation;—the sun is not concealed from the coldest regions eternally.”

“I protest I do not comprehend you,” said I.

“Well! you are the greatest savage I ever met with!” replied Lady Arabella; “and I should add, the greatest hypocrite, but that poets are allowed to deal in fiction. The gravity of self-possession, and the austerity of wisdom, will, nevertheless, give way to softer sensations, when eyes “love to gaze, and gaze to love!”

I now found that the verses which I had left at Lady Aubrey’s had been given by Isabella to Sir Sidney; and presented, by him, to Lady Arabella.

With

With an assumed frown, and a tone of the most ridiculous solemnity, she opened the paper, and began aloud to read the stanzas. I conjured her to desist. My intreaties only made her more determined to torment me, and several persons collecting round her, I was at a loss how to act. Among others, Lord Kencarth hastened towards us:—the verses were read, and every line criticised with merciless ridicule. Lady Arabella, whose vivacity resisted all my earnest solicitations to forbear, after concluding the last stanza, presented the paper to Isabella:—‘Permit me, divine enchantress!’ said she, with a tone and gesture irresistibly comical, ‘permit me to lay at your feet the romantic effusions of a rustic lover; whose pure and ardent flame mocks all the heroes of old, that embellish the annals of adventurous chivalry!’”

Isabella



Isabella blushed:—my pupil stared:—Sir Sidney looked grave;—and the whole circle enjoyed my confusion.

“Queer me, tutor, but I have found you out!” cried Lord Kencarth:—“you are taken in, my deep one;—dished, by all that is quizzical! The game is against you; and since you meant to play booty, dash my nobility but I’ll be even with you! So hark’ye, Miss, let you and I have a little conversation to-morrow morning: I have asked Lady Aubrey’s leave, and the thing will soon be settled.”

Isabella darted from the circle, and my pupil followed.

Lady Arabella, taking my arm, and leading me to the farthest end of the room, after laughing heartily, inquired where I had learned to make love so delightfully:—“Yet,” said she, “though you treated me so savagely, I am monstrously

stirouly sorry that I have exposed you to such ridicule. I have seen Miss Hanbury all the evening coquetting with Lord Kencarth; and I really thought it scandalous to desert such a lover for such a substitute. Forgive my raillery, I conjure you," continued Lady Arabella, at the same time assuming a serious and tender tone,—“and believe, that nothing but my regard for you should have induced me to act so absurdly.”

I bowed, but was too much vexed to make any answer.

After hesitating a few moments, during which the expression of her countenance entirely changed, she continued—“Say that you are not much chagrined by my nonsensical levity. Indeed, Mr. Ainsforth, it would give me more pain than I dare acknowledge to suppose, even for a moment, that any folly of mine could distress your feelings. The verses were given to me by Sir Sidney Aubrey

Aubrey as specimens of your poetical talents, and while I admired the subject of your adoration—forgive me if I confess—she was also an object of my envy.”

“ Can envy, the most poisonous of weeds, thrive in so gentle and so kind a bosom ?” said I.

“ What other name can I give to feelings so ridiculous ?” said Lady Arabella. “ It ought not to interest me—it ought not to give me pain.”

Again she hesitated.

“ What ought not to interest you ?” said I.

“ Your attention to Miss Hanbury.”

“ I have known her from an infant ; I love her as I should love a sister,” said I.

“ Ah ! how surely does your pen contradict your assertion,” interrupted Lady Arabella.

I found that the tone of voice, and levity of manners, which, till that moment, seemed to characterise her conversation,

versation, were merely assumed as the adopted nonsense of fashionable life, and that the lovely Lady Arabella, who had hitherto appeared to be the most affected of high-bred triflers, was, in reality, a reasonable being."

Sir Sidney now joined us. "What an interesting tête-a-tête!" cried he, endeavouring to force a smile, which the fixed solemnity of his countenance sternly opposed. "Mr. Ainsforth is a practised deceiver," continued he, "and I counsel you not to believe him."

Lady Arabella scarcely knew how to answer; but with some difficulty, and a deep sigh, replied—"You are all deceivers; yet I think Mr. Ainsforth deserves confidence as much as any of you."

"There never was a more decided hypocrite," continued my cousin. "Even at the moment that he hopes to impose on your credulity, his vagrant heart is sighing for Miss Hanbury."

"Can

“ Can you not deny the charge?”  
said Lady Arabella.

I made no reply.

“ You are silent :—well, I can only  
admire your choice, and thank Sir  
Sidney for his caution,” continued her  
ladyship.

Lady Aubrey now requested my cousin to find Isabella, and to inform her that she was going. He departed, leaving me with Lady Arabella. There was a something bewitchingly animated in her manner and conversation—something so impressive, whether grave or gay, that I had not power to leave her. Sir Sidney conducted his mother to her carriage : Lord Kencarth proposed returning home ; and I took leave of Lady Arabella, after obtaining her permission to renew my visit on the following morning.



## CHAP. LXXXII.

I PASSED the remainder of the night in rumination. The childish levity of Isabella's conduct, the evident indifference of Sir Sidney on the subject, and Lady Arabella's impressive conversation, by turns occupied my thoughts. My interview with Miss Hanbury, on the preceding day at Lady Aubrey's, convinced me that her attachment to my cousin was at an end, and that her aversion to me was insuperable. With this conviction strongly, deeply engraved upon my mind, Lady Arabella's attentions could not be remembered without an emotion of gratitude—a sentiment of esteem. She was young, lovely, amiable, and ingenuous. I had been persecuted by fortune, neglected by Isabella. Pride began to gain an ascendancy

ancy over attachment, and I resolved at least to cultivate Lady Arabella's esteem, and to try, as my last resource, whether jealousy would not awaken the latent sparks of that affection, which once warmed the bosom of my ungrateful idol.

I passed the next day chiefly in Lady Arabella's society. In the morning we strolled to Kensington gardens, and in the evening I attended her to the opera. Every moment augmented my admiration, while her attentions convinced me that the glow of esteem was reciprocal. Isabella's determined coldness had wearied my mind into disgust, and I began to consider my attachment as a proof of obstinate perseverance, no less absurd than hopeless.

A week passed, during which I saw but little of my pupil, and still less of the Aubrey family. My constant attentions to Lady Arabella occupied my

mind entirely : I was her companion at all public places, and, consequently, the object of universal envy. My vanity was flattered; my revenge, in a great measure, gratified. Still, Rosanna, my heart partook of no share in the triumph, and if a change could decidedly take place, I hoped for repose and indifference, rather than for any glowing sensation of the heart which could boast the smallest affinity to love.

The period now rapidly advanced which was to decide Lord Kencarth's wager with the Duke of Heartwing. On the eighth day, I observed my pupil more than commonly agitated. There was a strange and unaccountable reserve in his manner and conversation that excited my curiosity. I inquired how he felt his mind respecting the Duke's approaching triumph?—He made no answer, but looked more wretched than a culprit who awaited the hour of execution.

cution. After passing some time in fullen silence, he addressed me—"Dash me, Ainsforth, but I am sorry to be the messenger of bad news: yet the truth must come out; and therefore the sooner you know it the better. Lady Aubrey has settled the business, and I mean to marry Isabella to-morrow morning."

"Impossible!" said I, almost petrified with astonishment.

"Dash my nobility, but 'tis true," cried my pupil. "The Dowager spoke a good word:—the neat-one was willing; and Sir Sidney has settled the whole business to the satisfaction of all parties. Now, tutor, though the ring is bought, and the parson bespoke, if you like the girl, dash my jasey, if I won't be off after all; for now it comes to a pinch, queer my caxon, if I have the heart to do a dishonourable thing, or to rob any man of happiness, for the enhance-

enhancement of my own. Speak the word, and quiz me, but I'll do the thing handsomely."

This intelligence for a moment made my fortitude stagger; but the indifference of Isabella would not even then have alienated my affections, had not Lord Kencarth's generosity decided my resolution. "Take her," said I; "she does not deserve to influence so generous a mind."

"I will take her, but upon one condition," cried my pupil; "which is, that you will marry Lady Arabella. She is a nice girl, dish my sconce; and if you don't take her for better or for worse, quiz me, but I'll lose my wager."

"You cannot answer for the caprices of a woman," said I; "a young, a lovely, an ambitious woman. Lady Arabella is amiable; but she looks forward to a prouder alliance."



“The greater the danger, the more the honour,” replied my pupil. “Quiz me, but the girl is ready to leap into your arms; and you are such a flat that some deeper one will oust you while you are prosing about it. Since you give up a wife for me, dash my jasey, but I am bound to find a substitute.”

While we were conversing on the subject, Doctor Pimpernel’s name was announced. He entered the room with an air of triumph, and with insulting solemnity informed us that the Duke was married.

“Married!” exclaimed I, looking at my pupil, who loudly vociferated—“Then dash my wig, but I have had a lucky escape; for, queer my nobility, if, of the two, I hadn’t rather been hanged than married. D—me, Ainsforth, you may now take your choice; the little Welch coquette, or Lady Arabella.”

“Lady

"Lady Arabella!" cried the Doctor.

"Aye, my hearty!—Tutor is up to your gossip; he knows how to arrange business, as well as the best match-maker among you. But, quiz my caxon, who has the Duke married?"

"That remains a secret for the present," replied Doctor Pimpernel.

"Come, no underhand work, master doctor," cried my pupil; "I am not to be tricked out of ten thousand by a sham. I'll see the bride; dash my wig, but I'll see the parson too:—so come along, tutor—let's be off. The carriage is at the door, and we'll go row the deep-ones. Dish me, but I'm in luck."

"What! to have lost ten thousand guineas?" said I.

"O! queer my caxon, any thing but a wife!" replied his lordship, darting out of the room in high spirits.

We stepped into the carriage, and the coachman was ordered to drive with all possible expedition to the Duke of Heartwing's.

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### CHAP. LXXXIII.

ON our arrival at the door, Lord Kenearth sent in his name, with his request to see the Duke immediately. We were ushered into the saloon, where we found his Grace in close conversation with Doctor Pimpernel, who, notwithstanding our speed, had reached the Duke's before us. My pupil desired to know whether the intelligence conveyed to him by the Doctor was true : and requested that his Grace would give him such incontestible proofs of his marriage as should

should authorize the payment of the sum lost.

“ I pledge you my word of honour,” said Doctor Pimpernel, “ that I had the supreme felicity of giving the divine creature away ! and more transcendent beauty, heightened by superlative purity of mind and reputation, never embellished the honours of a ducal coronet ! I had the pleasure of presenting his Grace to the angelic mortal ! and never since the union of Venus and Adonis, did so illustrious a pair offer up their vows at the hymeneal altar !”

“ This may all be very true, Doctor,” said Lord Kencarth ; “ but, queer my nobility, if I don’t see the Dukes, and the parson, the clerk, the licence, and the whole paraphernalia of the business. I’m not to be done over.”

The clergyman who had performed the ceremony was now ushered in. My

pupil began to think, that the affair was beyond a jest. "Well," said he sighing, "now let us see the lady."

"More loveliness and virtue never graced the exalted sphere of nobility!" cried Doctor Pimpernel. "I have long known the divine creature! and it gives me infinite pleasure to see, that superior rank will be the reward of superior virtue! Her Grace will take the lead of all the fashionables!—she will outshine the very sun!—she will kill the envious with the brilliancy of her attractions, and become the honour of her illustrious consort! The Duke has only known her Grace three days—but he is enchanted! I have long seen and admired her. She is nobly born, and highly educated;—but she wanted fortune to draw her into notice. She was a rich gem in a mine; a pearl in the vast ocean; a star in a dark hemisphere!—Well!"

"Dish



"Disb my sponce! let us see her," interrupted my pupil somewhat impatiently.

The Duke's countenance was the index of a mind exhilarated by success:—"You will see, my Lord," said he, with a triumphant smile, "you will be convinced, that the 'Old School' is no bad thing, and that a man on the wrong side sixty may aspire to a beautiful woman; when twenty-one cannot make a conquest. I have to thank your lordship's impetuosity, and my friend Pimpernel's discernment, for one of the most celestial stars that ever moved on the amorous horizon!—and I flatter myself that the Duchefs of Heartwing will add a wreath to my coronet, which will outblaze all the gems that have been placed there by my long train of ancestors."

"Most likely," said I; "but can we not see this brilliant constellation?"

“ Aye, dish my wig, let us have a peep, if only to console me for the loss of my ten thousand,” cried my pupil.

“ Well !” said Doctor Pimpernel, “ I will endeavour to persuade her Grace : she is all exquisite sensibility ;—timid as Daphne—yet haughty as the wife of Jove ! You must submit to see her only for a moment ; this sudden marriage has overwhelmed the delicacy of her feelings ;—but the felicity of making the Duke a present of ten thousand guineas, to compensate for her want of fortune, vanquished her scruples, and rendered his Grace the happiest of mortals !”

The Doctor quitted the saloon :—the Duke hummed an opera air as he threw himself on a sofa, and we waited with the utmost impatience for her Grace’s arrival.

In a few minutes she entered.—Her face was veiled, but her form was indeed beautiful.

beautiful. She wore the dress of a vestal; a robe of thin white satin falling to her feet, and a zone of pearls, presented that morning by the illustrious bridegroom, composed the whole of her paraphernalia. The thickness of her veil prevented our seeing her features; but she held it, with a hand, white as the most polished marble. I approached her; she trembled.

"Are you satisfied?" said the Duke, exultingly.

"With as much as we see, it is impossible to be otherwise," answered I.

"Yet I think my pupil would be still more gratified by a sight of her Grace's features. She will forgive that curiosity which is excited by the beauty of her form, and the purity of her mind will feel no debasement from the gaze of respectful admiration."

She sighed, but remained motionless as a statue.

"My Lord Duke, will you request the favour of her Grace to unveil?" said I.

"That proof of condescension will depend entirely upon her own will," replied the Duke. The lovely bride retired towards the door, which opened to a splendid boudoir; her limbs scarcely supported her—she was near falling—when I caught her on my arm,—the veil fell from her face, and my eyes instantly recognized the amiable—but unfortunate—Julie de Beaumont.

I had sufficient command over myself not to betray her. I whispered, "Fear nothing; I rejoice in your good fortune."—She revived. The Duke coldly inquired what ailed her Grace? and Doctor Pimpernel attributed the sudden emotion of her mind to the awkwardness of her situation. She retired. The clergyman and the doctor proved the marriage. The Duke was enchanted with

with his success, and we departed; I to muse in silence on the revolutions of fortune, and my worthy pupil to lament his folly, and the loss of his ten thousand guineas.

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#### CHAP. LXXXIV.

ON the following morning I found that Lady Aubrey had quitted London, and set out for Glenowen, in order to celebrate her marriage with Edward Blagden. Sir Sidney and Isabella were the companions of her journey; the latter having written a letter to Lord Kencarth, declining the proposal of his hand, and bidding him a decisive farewell.

My pupil was more gratified than offended by Miss Hanbury's refusal;—the caprice of the moment was over; and the inducement to sacrifice his liberty

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existing



existing no longer, he felicitated himself in his escape, and swore never again to make a bet upon so perilous a subject.

I continued my visits to Lady Arabella with undiminished assiduity. Miss Hanbury's trifling coquetry had palsied the ardour of my affection, and I resolved, at least, to punish her for the fickleness of her conduct.

Three weeks had passed in the society of my new idol, when a visit from Doctor Pimpernel once more undermined my prospect of happiness. A private conversation with the Duchess, which lasted some hours, determined her Grace on forbidding my visits. I received my *congè* with considerable chagrin, and the lovely Lady Arabella the next morning set out for Bath with her mother.

Once more defeated in my hopes of felicity, I opened my heart to my worthy though eccentric pupil. He counselled me to follow Lady Arabella, and

promised to accompany me in my chivalrous exploit with all the zeal of a brave and trusty 'Squire. The temptation was too powerful to be resisted; and early on the following morning we set out together. Nothing important occurred during our rapid journey. We reached Bath in fifteen hours;—but to our infinite surprise we discovered that the Duchess of Riversford had altered her plan of destination, and proceeded with her daughter to a distant part of the country.

On the evening of our arrival, I determined to visit the patron of my youth, the worthy and liberal Mr. Randolph. My pupil remained at Bath, to be present at a race on which he had a considerable sum depending; while I departed for Bristol to pay the debt so long due from gratitude and friendship.

I found Mr. Randolph in a state of health that menaced his speedy dissolution.

tion. He received me with open arms:—all that had passed he recalled to memory, though I wished most earnestly to bury the prominent events in eternal oblivion. He lamented that I had endured a temporary captivity on his account; while he attributed the trifling service which I rendered him on the night of my walk from Bristol to Bath, as the cause of his renewed prosperity, and preservation from death, at a moment when reason was almost vanquished by the pressure of misfortune.

Mr. Randolph requested that I would remain with him, at least, some days. “I have many friends,” said he, “who unite in reconciling my mind to the will of Heaven, and in smoothing my path to that resting-place, where the vicissitudes of fortune will perplex me no longer. But you are entitled to more than common esteem; you demand from me the affection of a father. In that moment-

momentous hour, when adversity frowned and every hope forsook me, unknown to you, with no claim to your compassion, but that which my misfortunes gave me, I found in your breast an advocate, from your genuine philanthropy the means of preservation."

-O I conjured him to think of it no more.

"Not think of it, Walsingham!" said he, pressing his hand upon his heart; "while vitality warms this bosom, I shall never cease to remember it. Since my return to Bristol, Fortune has been profuse of her favours, and every plan of emolument has been successful, even beyond my most sanguine wishes. My West India plantations have been prolific; my commercial concerns prosperous; and now I am preparing to quit this busy scene of toil and inquietude, with the conscious gratification, that destiny has

has at last afforded me the means of rendering you happy."

His language penetrated my heart; for while I viewed his emaciated frame, his hollow and sunk eyes, and heard the feeble voice, struggling with a short and difficult respiration, I anticipated the termination of a life which had done honour to humanity. My affliction was acute and certain;—and my reflections were mournful, as my distress was poignant.

Mr. Randolph observed the gloom which marked my features, and with a faint smile endeavoured to treat the subject lightly. "All the joys of this sub-lunary state are transient," said he; "and those vexations, even if they amount to sorrows, which alienate the soul from the fascinations of existence, may be valued as possessing a beneficial tendency. I am weary of a toilsome life, and sigh for  
a long



a long holiday of rest. You will well employ the wealth I shall leave behind me."

He stopped abruptly, and took several turns round the room. "But we will change this melancholy topic," continued he, with an assumed gaiety; "for I must not carry a countenance of sorrow to a scene of joy. To-morrow I shall witness the felicity of a friend,—and you shall bear me company."

I bowed assent, but my mind was too deeply interested in Mr. Randolph's fate to enter rapidly on a new train of thinking. The day passed in anxious hopes and fears that wrung my heart. The friend of my youth, the voluntary patron, whose liberality had completed the task so zealously begun by Mr. Hanbury, was hourly sinking to the grave!—Could I witness the desolation of such distinguished virtues, and be tranquil? Yet, Rosanna, however severely I felt the  
sorrow

forrow of that moment, it was of little magnitude in comparison with that which I have since suffered.

Early on the following morning we repaired to Clifton, to be present at the marriage of Mr. Randolph's friend. I waited in the carriage while he stopped at the lodgings of the bridegroom. The party had only a few minutes before repaired to the village church, which stood on the summit of the hill, not far distant. The day was brilliantly clear, though it was winter; the bells were ringing as we approached the church-yard, and every object seemed to assume the lively garb of rustic celebration. We entered the aisle; the ceremony was just begun; the bride, though not in the rich bloom of juvenile attractions, was uncommonly handsome; and the happy partner of her choice, was my old acquaintance Mr. McArthur.

But

But how, Rosanna, shall I delineate, how describe the awful and soul-agonizing scene, which followed rapidly on the hour of anticipated joy!—Oh, Heaven! while my hand traces the dreadful events of that momentous period, my heart shudders, and my brain shrinks like the sensitive herb!—would to God it were withered for ever!

Near the bride, like the pale spectre of a departed angel, robed in a vest of white cambric, and with a countenance serenely pensive, stood Amelia Woodford. She was deeply intent on the awful ceremony then performing; and, as we stole gently along the aisle, did not observe us. My heart throbbed with a new torrent of circulation. I approached the group; Amelia turned her eyes towards me; and in a moment sunk on the marble steps before the altar.

Colonel Aubrey and Mrs. Woodford knelt and supported her. The ceremony

mony was interrupted, and my situation was undescrivable. Mrs. Woodford intreated me to depart:—Mr. Randolph's consternation was evident; and Colonel Aubrey's countenance evinced such sensations of distress as pierced every fibre in my bosom. My feet seemed rooted to the pavement:—I scarcely knew where I was, while every thing around me looked horribly obscure.

Mr. Randolph shook my arm:—“Walsingham,” said he, “whatever this interruption may threaten, it is but too evident that you are the cause of it. I conjure you to quit the scene.”

Colonel Aubrey conveyed Amelia into the vestry, and I permitted Mr. Randolph to guide my steps back to Mr. M'Arthur's lodgings.

I could not rest in a state of uncertainty, but inquiring where Mrs. Woodford resided, hastened thither as swiftly as my feet would bear me. Her house was at  
some

some distance, near the Hot-wells. I rushed into the parlour, and demanded of the servant whether any intelligence had arrived respecting Miss Woodford. This question brought on a farther elucidation, and I was informed that Amelia had been just fourteen days the wife of Colonel Aubrey; that on the following week they purposed sailing for Gibraltar;—and that the bride of my friend Mr. M<sup>r</sup> Arthur, was Lady Kencarth, the amiable mother of my eccentric pupil.

I had scarcely received this intelligence, when a carriage stopped at the door. I flew to meet it;—but, Oh God! what an object did my startled eyes encounter! The noble, the benignant, the generous Aubrey, bearing in his trembling arms the lifeless form of his adored Amelia! My brain seemed to shudder;—every limb stiffened with horror!—I gazed wildly round me. The stupendous rocks which hung over  
the



the slow winding Avon seemed to blacken while I beheld them. I fancied that my presence darkened the scene of wonders;—I was wild and frantic.

Colonel Aubrey conveyed the cold remains of all that he loved in this world of troubles to a small parlour, where he gently reclined them on a sofa;—and falling on his knees, with his hands clasped in the agony of sorrow, and his eyes fixed in speechless fondness, remained motionless as a statue,—gazing on the placid countenance of that celestial shadow, whose meek and injured spirit had flown to happier regions.

Every aid was ineffectually administered to re-animate the fountain of exhausted vitality: but the source was petrified!—the once warmly throbbing bosom was frozen by the fixed shaft of death! That lip, from which truth and harmony had stolen, even to the hearts of all who heard her, was sealed in icy bonds;

bonds; and that cheek, where the living rose glowed as an emblem of the purest spring, now seemed to smile at the weary spirit's final emancipation.

I approached Colonel Aubrey—his eyes were still bent on the corpse, and all his senses were absorbed by sorrow. I would have snatched the lifeless hand of Amelia—I would have kissed it, but the distracted husband, stretching forth his arm, exclaimed, “Pollute not the ashes of your victim! insult not the cold remains of the departed angel whom you have murdered!”

Mr. Randolph, who had followed me, at that moment entered the room, and looked aghast. Lady Kencarth's carriage stopped at the door; I heard the deep groan issuing from Mrs. Woodford's bosom: the combination of horrors seemed to encompass me—I quitted the scene of death, and darted out of the house like the fiend of Desolation.

The

The day became gloomy, the wintry wind howled among the stupendous rocks, and the rain poured in torrents down their craggy sides; while I, scarcely knowing whither I bent my way, continued to walk rapidly along the narrow path which winds beside the Avon.—The phantom of Amelia seemed to follow me—her voice in imagination met my ear amidst the loudest whistling of the storm, and my mind was agonized to frenzy. I threw my feverish form at the foot of a jutting precipice, and resigned myself to the very misery of sorrow. The elements conspired to aid the dreadful chaos of my bewildered brain. I had outraged the very laws of Nature, and her dreadful artillery was pointed at the devoted wretch who had been her pupil, and was destined to become her victim.

I remained in the solitary seclusion till evening closed; the twilight was  
tempest-

tempestuous; the black clouds rapidly shut out the last glimpse of day, as if impatient to deepen the horrors of my destiny. The torrent roared down the rocks beside me; the raven screamed above; the keen blast hurried by, sometimes whistling shrilly through the flinty apertures, and at others deeply moaning between the dark and towering ramparts; while the troubled current of the Avon rolled with a sullen murmur along the winding and tremendous chasm.

Such a scene, Rosanna, would have maddened a stoic's brain: I leave you to judge what were the sensations of a being, born to be the very fool of nature!

## CHAP. LXXXV.

I REMAINED in this dark and troubled solitude the whole night in the wildness of despair! I had left my hat at Mrs. Woodford's; the rain beat incessantly on my burning head; the wind pierced my agitated bosom; and at the first glimpse of dawn, I presented to the pitiless eye of Heaven the image of a maniac. I rose from my melancholy seat; my limbs were almost petrified; my cloaths were drenched with the midnight torrents, and my strength exhausted by the agonies of affliction.

With slow and feeble steps I returned towards Bristol. I was obliged to pass Mrs. Woodford's lodging: as I approached the house my persecuting genius prompted me to enter. A female  
servant



servant opened the door; I rushed by her, and hastened towards the room where I had, on the preceding day, left the lifeless remains of the once-beautiful Amelia.

I found Colonel Aubrey seated near the sofa, with his arms folded, his eyes fixed on the corpse, and his countenance settled into the deepest melancholy. The faint dawn entered the window; a taper, burnt to the socket, shed a glimmering light around the apartment. I threw myself at the feet of my friend and patron.—“ Behold,” said I, “ the wretch who was sent into this breathing world for your destruction!—the ill-fated mortal, whom destiny has at last driven to the worst scene of human sorrow ! It is fit that I should expiate my crime ; I only wish, before I shake off this weary miserable being, to convince your mind that I have been an involuntary criminal.”

Colonel Aubrey remained unmoved, while the paleness of his cheek, and the frequent tears which flowed from the full channels of his heart, convinced me that his ear was deaf to every sound, his senses beyond the touch of every pang except that which destiny had rendered incurable.

I returned to Bristol. My mind was bent on self-destruction, and every object that met my eyes seemed hateful to me; I loathed the very sun. The busy hum of men jarred on my aching brain, and a burning, wasting fever scorched up the source of circulation. I stopped and purchased a phial of that drug, which can lull the throb of agony, or wrap the weary sufferer in the long sleep of death. The boy who sold me the fatal potion, seemed unwilling to let me have so large a quantity.—I pleaded the inconvenience of a painful malady, and the necessity for having the means of rest during a

tedious journey. These reasons silenced his scruples, and I hastened to Mr. Randolph's with my pernicious treasure.

On my arrival, I found a letter which had been sent express from Glenowen; I flew to my chamber, and eagerly opened it; the contents were as follows—

“ Lose not a moment, Walsingham, if you wish to see the expiring Lady Aubrey. The awful period of elucidation is at hand; hasten, I conjure you, hasten to witness the eventful moment.

“ ISABELLA.”

I wrote two letters—one to Lord Kencarth, apologizing for my sudden departure—and the other to Mr. Randolph, who still remained with Mrs. Woodford at the Hot-wells.

The close of my disastrous life seemed rapidly approaching, and my weary mind was scarcely susceptible of any deeper

impression than that which it had received by the death of Mrs. Aubrey.

Before noon, I set out in a post-chaise for Glenowen; the scene of my early sorrows—the spot where my infant mind had been poisoned by prejudices, which the expansion of reason had not been able to exterminate. Oh Rosanna! how heavy did my heart feel! how perpetually did memory turn to past events, and at every recapitulated scene bid me shrink almost to annihilation.—For what could I then hope to live?—to regret the prospects which time had seen fading in hourly sadness? to bear the reproaches of violated friendship, the agonies of self-reproof, the pain of disappointed hope, and the stigma of ingratitude? These were the links that chained my troubled spirit, that bade it linger round the ruins of departed peace; and still I hugged them to my heart, though they chilled it to the centre. I had no  
sweet

sweet incentive which might allure me on to cherish life ; no dawning perspective to calm the throbbings of my lacerated heart ; no watchful eye to cool my feverish brain with the balm of sympathetic pity. Oh Nature ! amidst thy infinity of changes, thou hadst not one hour of consolation in store for a wretch whom thy stern laws had propelled to error ; thy sensibilities, thy fatal sensibilities to guilt ! I looked on every side : —I endeavoured, among the threatening storms that gathered, to descry one ray that promised a closing hour of calm and tempered lustre. All was dark and dreary ; while I felt conviction strike upon my mind, that, though Time's perpetually moving wing might overshadow the lengthening catalogue of griefs engraved upon my heart, it never could be entirely effaced, but by the sleep of death. Then, why did I protract the pangs, the miseries which were destined



ultimately to close the scene of unexampled sorrow.

My journey was tedious and melancholy. I fancied every moment an age, while suspense and doubt pressed painfully on my senses. The idea of Lady Aubrey's death gave rise to a variety of hopes and fears. A dread, which was blended with the impatience of curiosity, possessed my mind; and I rather thought it incumbent on me to summon all my fortitude for a new trial, than anticipate a release from the heavy pressure of misfortune. The depth of winter rendered the roads in some places nearly impassable; and after two days and a night of incessant travelling, during which time I met with innumerable obstacles to lengthen the weary hours, at last I arrived within five miles of Glenowen.

The floods, which had been formed by mountain torrents in many parts of the country, were particularly deep in the vicinity

vicinity of the manor-house. I therefore discharged my chaise, and determined to proceed on foot, by a cross-road, which would shorten the distance at least three miles. It was at the close of day that I set out to complete my journey. The weather was clear and frosty, and the moon, just rising above the dark eminences beyond Glenowen, promised to light me, secure from every danger. I felt a strange and mournful depression of spirits, as I approached the churchyard,—the resting-place of the pure and gentle Penelope. When I came to the grave, I stopped;—I could not pass it without an emotion of sorrow, which rushed into my eyes, and quivered round my heart. The moon-beams fell on the white spire of the village house of prayer, and the long grass, which the bleak wind from the mountains waved to and fro over my parent's ashes, was sprinkled with the chilling dews of evening. I

raised my eyes towards the heavens; the sky was dappled with white clouds gliding rapidly along, at times wrapping the moon in a thin veil which cast a shadowy light on every distant object. The manor-house, which during the full splendour of summer was embosomed in a rich dell of vegetation, was now visible amidst the bare and leafless branches. The whole scene was changed since I had last beheld it, and the tenour of my mind seemed to follow the desolation of nature, with a degree of sympathy that was undescribable.

While I stood for a moment near my mother's grave, I heard a foot-passenger at the little gate which opened from the church-yard to the park; he was whistling,—but on a sudden became silent. I observed him looking over the low wall, and thinking myself the object of curiosity, was proceeding to meet him, when in an instant he was gone. I  
called,

called, "Who passes?" "No person answered. I proceeded across the park towards the wood,—the scene of that dreadful night's events which banished me from my native home, to wander over the earth, the sport of capricious fortune.

When I came to the termination of the wood, I found that the lower ground of the park which led to the manor-house was entirely inundated by the various torrents that had fallen from the adjacent precipices. I had no possible means of reaching the family mansion, but by returning more than half a mile, and taking a winding path from the church-yard, along the side of the mountain. With speed that was accelerated by the impatience of disappointment, I re-trod the wood, and re-passed the grave of my mother. The night became cloudy, and the moon dimly shone, through a thick and hazy atmosphere. Still I pursued

my way, till I came to a part of the acclivity, where the path was rugged and narrow, when I again heard footsteps following, and again challenged the person, by an inquiry, whether I was in the right road to the manor-house: no answer was returned, and I continued to walk hastily.

I now recollected that the path which I trod was originally made by order of Sir Edward Aubrey, for my pleasure, when I was an infant. It was by the same road that I used to ascend the breezy eminence, and imbibe the morning air when health and innocence were the inmates of my bosom. I remembered the sportive gambols I had played to excite the smiles of my patron, and the many summer evenings when we had descended the rough slope, as the sun sunk in the horizon, diffusing its crimson lustre over the surrounding scenery.

While



While I was wrapt in reflection, and almost heedless of the narrow path, which hung over a declivity of considerable depth, on a sudden I felt my arms seized and pinioned behind me.—I resisted:—the assailant pushed me with all his strength, and I fell headlong down the side of the mountain. In my descent I received a blow on the temple, from a projecting block of stone, and with great difficulty saved myself from rolling to the bottom, where the waters were collected in a deep and extensive lake. I found that no limb was broken, though I had fallen near sixteen feet; and, with some difficulty, again climbed to the path from which I had been precipitated; my head bleeding violently, and my body covered with bruises. I proceeded as speedily as I was able towards the manor-house: on entering the portico, my voice, which was nearly exhausted, brought the family to my assistance; and among the rest,

I was

I was glad to recognize the honest North Briton, old Andrew Mac-Gregor. His joy at seeing me was warm and undissembled:—Sir Sidney and Isabella were also unbounded in their greetings.

My wound was closed with bandages, and the effusion of blood stopped. Every person in the household seemed anxious to assist me, and no one was more zealous than my ancient enemy Mrs. Blagden. She lamented the accident, as she termed it, and was at a loss to account for its happening; but her smiles, speciously put on to cover the secret malice of her heart; her sighs, which arose from disappointment more than pity, did not escape the penetrating observation of Sir Sidney Aubrey: his indignation was evident;—it awakened ideas which, till that moment, never entered my mind. I watched his countenance;—it was mysteriously pensive;—a contraction of the brow, with a half smile, the effect of well-

well-founded scepticism, presented an index of his thoughts, while the subtle Mrs. Blagden lamented my misfortune with more than natural sorrow.

I found on my arrival at Glenowen, that the letter which I received at Mr. Randolph's had been sent, by express, to Lady Kencarth's in Hanover-square, from thence dispatched after me to Bath, and forwarded to Bristol by the assiduous attention of my pupil.

I was ushered into Lady Aubrey's apartment, where I found her in a state of health at once so dangerous and extraordinary, that my astonishment was not to be concealed. Her form was wasting rapidly;—her features shrunk, and ghastly;—her mental faculties seemed to partake of the debility of her frame, and she scarcely knew me. At the period when I beheld Lady Aubrey in this dreadful situation, she had been married ten days; during six of which, her painful and alarming symptoms

symptoms of dissolution had hourly augmented. Mrs. Blagden perpetually attended her; Sir Sidney and Miss Hambury by turns undertaking the task of midnight watching. I know not why, but as I entered the chamber, the blood seemed to curdle at my heart. I shuddered.—My cousin observed the instinctive sensation, and a deep sigh stole from his breast in unison with my feelings. Mrs. Blagden with upraised eyes put on the semblance of sanctified submission. I inquired for my new relation, Lady Aubrey's juvenile husband;—and was informed that he had on that evening set out for Abergavenny to fetch a physician. I remained near the pillow of Lady Aubrey till the hour arrived when she was to take an opiate, ordered by a village apothecary. I then took my leave, and retired to my chamber; Sir Sidney and Isabella remained with the invalid.

My

My suspicions being awakened by the attempt on my life, and confirmed by my aunt's extraordinary illness, I resolved not to undress myself that night, but to keep a vigilant watch on every thing that was passing. The fawning attentions of Mrs. Blagden, the absence of her nephew, and the stern indignation which was visible in Sir Sidney's countenance, convinced my mind that all was not right. The apartment which was destined for me, was at a considerable distance from Lady Aubrey's chamber: I had taken a book from the library more to keep me awake than to amuse me; and a large wood fire being kindled to air the room, which was spacious and lofty, I threw myself into a chair, determined to pass the remainder of the night in watching.



## CHAP. LXXXVI.

THE house was perfectly still within, but the wind blew shrilly round the outside, as it descended in frequent gusts from the neighbouring mountains. The book which I had chosen to amuse me, was of little service, for the perpetually busy intruder, Thought, prevented my attending to the effusions of fancy, while such mysterious realities demanded my attention. As I contemplated the retrospect of my past life, I found that the prominent events had been in general anticipated by a presentiment, as extraordinary as it was certain. The impression of the moment when I called this circumstance to mind, rather inspired me with a calm and steady resolution, than any anticipation of approaching trials. I opened my book, hurried over  
a few

a few pages, made two or three turns round the room, arranged my fire, and again, with a vacant eye, read several lines, without knowing the subject or even the words they presented. Finding that books could not divert the mind from the pressure of thought, I laid my volume on the table, and with folded arms began to muse without interruption.

An hour passed, and every thing had been tranquil, when a sort of rustling commenced in the gallery which led to my apartment. I concluded that Lady Aubrey was worse, and was taking my light to visit her chamber, when I heard a loud knock at my door. I inquired who was there; but no person answered. I passed into the gallery, but saw nothing. The singularity of the circumstance surprised, but it did not alarm me. I re-entered my chamber, and again listened with increased attention: presently the  
knock

knock was repeated.—I suddenly rushed towards the door, and on opening it, I perceived a sword lying near the threshold.—I took it up, and returning to my room began to examine it. The blade was nearly cemented to the scabbard by rust, and the hilt, though curiously wrought, was evidently of an ancient fashion. I remembered having seen this antique weapon before; and I also recollected Mr. Hanbury's telling me that it once belonged to Sir Sidney's grandfather.

As I drew the sword from its scabbard, and looked earnestly at the embossed hilt, I perceived the crest of the family. The mysterious manner in which it was left at my door; the silent hour of midnight; and the variety of strange events that had previously occurred, bore marks of suspicion almost amounting to a certainty of danger. I again seated myself by the fire, and during another hour the house was perfectly still.

The

The wasting taper convinced me that morning was rapidly drawing on. I opened my shutters, but there yet appeared no glimpse of day:—the moon was declining behind a mountain, faintly lighting its summit, while every object in the foreground was wholly in obscurity.

By slow degrees the solitary hour passed on, and the blue tint of dawn-light at length began to render the scenery faintly visible. Every thing looked melancholy, cold, and dreary. I beheld the leafless branches, which in the glowing season formed a rich and interwoven forest:—I saw a quivering and extensive lake spread over the low ground of the park, which I had left in the verdant garb of summer. I thought, that if any thing could reconcile my heart in sighing an eternal farewell to my native scenes, it would be the gloomy desolation in which I then beheld them.

Rosanna,

Rosanna,—did not the idea bear some analogy to the general tenour of the human mind?—I thought it did; and my cheek reddened when I reflected, that our affections are too frequently alienated, when cheerless desolation menaces their object.

As soon as it was day I hastened to Lady Aubrey's chamber, first concealing my sword behind the hangings of my bed. I found that Sir Sidney and Isabella were still with my aunt, by whose pillow they had watched ever since I left them. Lady Aubrey had passed a more quiet night than any preceding one since the commencement of her illness: she had slept serenely; her countenance appeared more animated; and, as I approached her bed, she made signs that she knew me. There was something so compunctuous in her upraised eyes, so sorrowful in her looks, that all my resentment ceased, and I could have sacrificed



ficed my life at that moment to have accelerated her recovery.

I had not long been in the room when Mrs. Blagden entered:—she glanced round her with a suspicious curiosity, and, with a petulant tone, demanded how long I had been there.

Sir Sidney informed her, that I was that moment come to inquire how my aunt had rested.

“How, indeed!” cried Mrs. Blagden;—“nobody could rest while chamber doors were banging to and fro all night. Some folks are mighty watchful, and mighty fond of meddling with other folks’s business;—but I hate inquisitive people, and am always glad when they are disappointed.”

I made no answer;—Sir Sidney shook his head sorrowfully, and Mrs. Blagden continued:—

“I wonder that the Doctor is not come. He will set all things to rights,  
and

and clear every body that is suspected—”

“ Suspected ! of what ? ” said I, eagerly.

Mrs. Blagden reddened like scarlet : — “ Why,” replied she, after some hesitation, “ of not taking proper care of your aunt. I am sure I have watched her like a galley slave, so I have, and I get no thanks neither ; and since some people thought it necessary to send for those whom Lady Aubrey despises, let them wait upon her. I don’t want to be troublesome ; I can withdraw whenever my company is irksome. My nephew will take care that I am properly provided for ; and I shall turn my back upon Glenowen, without ever wishing to darken its doors again while I am living, God knows ! ”

“ Perhaps it would have been fortunate for the inmates of this mansion if you had never seen it,” said I.

“ I don’t

"I don't mind that," replied Mrs. Blagden; "I know you are all in league against me; but I'll be even with you—I'll make your hearts ache yet, before I have done with Glenowen. My nephew is Lord here; and you shall all turn out before I will bear such usage."

"For shame, for shame! hold other language," cried Sir Sidney.

"Then order Mr. Ainsforth to be gone," said the duenna; "be grateful for my kindness to you, and remember that you are in my power; I can render you odious to the whole world whenever I chuse to take the trouble. As for Mr. Ainsforth, I don't know what business he has here at all, or why he was sent for. Lady Aubrey could not want any body's assistance while *I* was with her: for the whole universe can tell what a friend *I* have been to this family, and what a slave I have toiled like all my lifetime."

“ I shall not intrude much longer,” said I, with a heavy heart: “ Heaven knows that all places are alike to me; I do not wish to provoke your malice, or to interfere with Sir Sidney’s happiness. ‘ Life is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually ‘ changing our scenes\* ;’ and those that I have witnessed already have been so replete with sorrows, that a deeper sense of misery never can be felt, while the smallest variation will not fail to dispel the glooms which surround me. The darkest, the most stormy night, must yield to the inevitable return of dawn. My mind has long been tempest-beaten by affliction.— The hour of tranquillity must come, either in the solitude of life, or the dark quiet of the grave.”

“ It must indeed, Walsingham!” cried Sir Sidney; “ it shall come; and it will

• Seneca.

depend on yourself, how far your heart will be capable of receiving happiness as a welcome inmate."

"I cannot even hope for happiness," answered I. "An untroubled state betwixt apathy and resignation may reconcile me to a weary existence; but the fine sensations never will again be mine. The thin and perishable texture of those nerves, which form the source of sensibility, is broken by the pressure of repeated wrongs; my heart will neither expand with joy nor shrink at sorrow—it will become an inanimate fountain of mere vitality, from whence the flow of circulation will pass, as the stream wanders through the valley, unconscious that it cherishes all it meets in its flow but never-ceasing progress."

"Can the warmly beating heart so entirely change?" said Isabella.

"It can," answered I; "all the spells which once held that heart in  
bondage



bondage are now severed. I am at last a thinking being. The stormy passions have settled into the calm of returning reason—pride, insulted pride, has produced the important victory, and I am once more tranquil.”

“ Then stay, and suffer us to partake of your repose,” said Sir Sidney.

“ Forgive me,” interrupted I; “ but this is a scene of such mysterious suspicion, that I must depart.”

“ The sooner the better,” cried Mrs. Blagden; “ nobody wanted your company; the house is full enough, without interlopers. You bring nothing but trouble—and you will leave nothing behind you but joy for your absence.”

“ I shall leave my friendship for Miss Hanbury and Sir Sidney,” said I; “ my gratitude to Lady Aubrey for the short period of kindness which cherished my infancy. And you, madam,” addressing Mrs. Blagden, “ you shall have that  
place

place in my memory to which your persevering malice has entitled you."

"You will not leave us, Walsingham?" said Isabella—"you cannot."

"Pardon me, Miss Hanbury," answered I; "but I must quit this scene of enchantment: I know its perils; by long and painful experience I know them! Let me therefore embrace the tranquil interval of reason, and fly from that magic which has too often fascinated and beguiled me."

"With Reason for your monitor, there can be no danger," said Sir Sidney; "you must not think of abandoning my mother in such a situation."

"I must," answered I, after a pause of several moments.

Lady Aubrey suddenly darted her hand towards me, and catching my arm, feebly cried, "Oh, Walsingham! do not, I conjure you do not leave me.—Stay, stay; for my poor Sidney's for-

rows will want the sympathy of friendship."

She hesitated—her hand trembled—her voice faltered—she struggled with the strong emotions of her mind, and she so far overcame them, as to continue her intreaties.—

"You shall not go," said she; "I have a world of wonders to disclose.—Heaven!—oh, Heaven forgive me."

Mrs. Blagden shook in every joint—

"Lady Aubrey is delirious!" said she with a countenance of dissembled sorrow; "she knows not what she says. Lord have mercy upon us! this is dismal work indeed! you had better leave her."

My aunt started up in her bed: "Oh! not with Mrs. Blagden," said she; "for pity's sake do not leave me to her mercy. The hour of repentance is come; and my anguish is unutterable. Colonel Aubrey—"

She

She could not proceed.

“What of him?” said I, eagerly.

She waved her hand—but her strength was exhausted, and she had not power to speak. Sir Sidney hid his face on his mother’s pillow—Miss Hanbury burst into tears, while Mrs. Blagden, with a ghastly smile, muttered revenge. The latter shortly after quitted the room—My cousin, with Isabella, promised to remain incessantly with Lady Aubrey, while I went to the parsonage in search of Mr. Hanbury, with the hope that I should be able to explain those events which, during our separation, had prejudiced him against me.

I was again obliged to traverse the narrow path that wound along the side of the acclivity from which I had been precipitated the preceding evening.—The marks which my feet had made on the rough slope were still visible, and I was at a loss to account for the singularity

larity of the adventure. The dreary scene lost nothing of its impressive sadness by the return of day-light.—The cold dim sky of a winter morning reflected in the wide lake, half frozen over, and the leafless branches incrust-ed with a white frost, were strikingly contrasted by the black vegetation which cloathed the adjacent mountains, still more than half concealed by the thin blue vapours which floated round them.

I stopped to contemplate the scene.—Every source of painful, fond remembrance still presented itself, though changed and robbed of all its original attractions. The parsonage was entirely covered with the stems of vines which in my youth I had planted. The church of Glenowen had been recently embellished, and its newly whitened walls added, I thought, a chilling coldness to the landscape. Notwithstanding the season,



son, and the mournful aspect of every object before me, I could not help feeling a sort of melancholy pleasure, when I reflected that fate had once more permitted me to behold my native mountains.

The conversation which had passed that morning at the manor-house now recurred to my memory; and a wish faintly stole across my mind that Sir Sidney and Isabella might renew their invitation. The dreary ravages of winter, thought I, will pass away, and renovated nature will again bloom, amidst her vast variety of splendours. The woods will bend beneath their weight of foliage—the mountains glow with summer radiance—the birds enliven the most sequestered shades with their wild melodies—and I shall not witness the beauties of my native solitude! I sighed—"I will remain at Glenowen," said I—for

Fancy whispered that I had been making a long journey, during which I had encountered many difficulties; that the busy, the fatiguing changes of every lingering hour were past; and I returned to that peaceful asylum, where toil and sorrow were destined to repose in safety. My opinion of attraction, originating in instinct and cherished by nature, is perhaps romantic; but it has ever been the pleasure of my most melancholy moments to look with Fancy's fascinated eye towards

#### MY NATIVE HOME.

O'er breezy hill or woodland glade,  
At morning's dawn or closing day,  
In summer's flaunting pomp array'd,  
Or penfive moonlight's silver grey,  
The wretch in sadness still shall roam,  
Who wanders from his Native Home.

While,

While, at the foot of some old tree,  
As meditation soothes his mind,  
Lull'd by the hum of wand'ring bee,  
Or rippling stream, or whisp'ring wind,  
His vagrant fancy still shall roam,  
And lead him to his Native Home.

Though Love a fragrant couch may weave,  
And Fortune heap the festive board,  
Still Mem'ry oft would turn to grieve,  
And Reason scorn the splendid hoard ;  
While he, beneath the proudest dome,  
Would languish for his Native Home.

To him the rushy roof is dear,  
And sweetly calm the darkest glen ;  
While Pomp, and Pride, and Pow'r appear,  
At best, the glitt'ring plagues of men ;  
Unsought by those that never roam  
Forgetful of their Native Home.

Let me to summer shades retire,  
With Meditation and the Muse !  
Or round the social winter fire,  
The glow of temper'd mirth diffuse ;  
Tho' winds may howl and waters foam,  
I still shall bless my Native Home.

And oh ! when Youth's extatic hour,  
And Passion's glowing noon are past ;  
Should age behold the tempest low'r,  
And Sorrow blow its keenest blast ;  
My shade, no longer doom'd to roam,  
Shall find the GRAVE a PEACEFUL HOME.

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## CHAP. LXXXVII.

WHEN I entered the garden of the parsonage-house, I stopped to collect my shattered resolution, and the first object that met my sight was the bower which I had made for Isabella : it was nearly destroyed by the wintry wind ; the hoops which supported the leafy canopy in the season of vegetation, were broken, and only held together by the interwoven twigs, which time had rendered strong and numberless. I was obliged to pass quite close to this once dear retreat,  
and

and my eyes involuntarily turned towards it: I beheld the rude bench where I had beguiled many a studious hour. It was notched and carved in various devices; among others, the name of Isabella was distinguishable in every direction. I placed my hand before my eyes, paused a moment, and then, endeavouring to shake off the phantoms which memory was rapidly gathering round me, hurried towards the parsonage.

I entered the little parlour in which, sleeping on my bed of hay, Lady Aubrey first found me. "Pshaw!" cried I, with a mixture of impatience and regret, "why will these things occur to my mind at such a moment?" Finding nobody in the lower rooms, I ascended to my chamber. I contemplated every trifling object with an interest that made me shiver. The casement, from which I had so often watched for Isabella, had demanded several minutes of fixed attention,



tention, when a servant girl entered the room. At the sight of a stranger she started, and her cheek grew red. I relieved her from the astonishment that was visible in her countenance, by inquiring for Mr. Hanbury.

"He is con away," cried the little mountaineer. "He has tacken a long journey, Cot pless him."

"A journey!—whither?" said I earnestly.

"To Pristol," answered she, curtesying; "to perry his rich relation. The news camed this morning, and my master was forely grief'd when he heard of it; for, Cot preserve him, he has a coot heart as effer man had, and those that do him wrong will surely go to the tivil."

"I hope that Mr. Randolph is not dead?" said I, scarcely able to utter the words.

"Troth, and that he is; as ted as a stone, poor coot man. He has left my  
master

master plenty of riches, and, Cot knows, he deserves it; for he has pin very sad and sick of late, and, in coot troth, I was afeard he would die, and go to Cot a-mighty, pefore my Lady Auprey was con to the tivil."

"Mr. Randolph dead!" said I, unable to stir from the spot where I then stood.

"And, I pray you, why are you so grief'd?" cried the Welsh servant.

"No coot comes of sorrow, when one can't mend it by criffin?"

"Oh God! when will my anguish cease!" exclaimed I. "When will thy chastening hand arrest the scourge of justice, and consign my aching bosom to the silence of the grave?"

I quitted the parsonage, and, with a mind labouring to resist its new source of affliction, returned as speedily as possible to Glenowen.

As

As soon as I entered the manor-house, I hastened to Lady Aubrey's apartment;—she was sleeping. I beckoned Isabella, and she followed me into the gallery. After some preparatory hints, I revealed the melancholy tidings:—she wept abundantly. “Forgive me, Walsingham,” said she, “if I shed tears at an event which renders you independent of all your enemies: I know that Mr. Randolph's fortune will be divided between us. He was rich, and I trust that you will yet be happy.”

I recollected the scene of Mrs. Aubrey's death;—my brain seemed to shrink with horror. Miss Hanbury was yet a stranger to the fate of Amelia, and I had not courage to reveal it.

On my return to Lady Aubrey's room, I found Mrs. Blagden sitting by her pillow. Her countenance convinced

vinced me that she knew the cause of my distress, and Isabella's tears. "You were in a mighty great hurry to take yourself off," said she. "Had you treated me with a little more civility, I should have given you a letter, which Mr. Hanbury sent to the manor-house early in the morning. But some folks are so haughty, and hold their heads so high, that one is afraid to approach them."

"A letter!" said I; "give it me quickly."

"I hardly know what I have done with it," replied Mrs. Blagden, looking round the room. "But it is of little consequence; he has not left you a shilling, I dare say. Your scandalous goings on have long since lost you his regard, and now you must thank yourself if you die a beggar."

She now produced the letter from her pocket: the seal had evidently been broken. It was from Mr. Hanbury,  
who

who had just heard of my arrival, informing me of Mr. Randolph's death, and desiring me to come to the parsonage without delay, as he was, in a few minutes, going to set off for Bristol."

"When did this letter arrive?" said I.

"Soon after day-break," replied Mrs. Blagden. "But you was in such a cursed ill-humour, that I did not think of it till this moment."

"And how did you know the nature of its contents?" said I.

Mrs. Blagden's cheek became crimson. "Why, I guessed it," replied she.

"Oh monster!—monster of cunning and deceit!" exclaimed I.

She hurried out of the room with a determined sneer, which left no doubt of her treacherous conduct. Lady Aubrey was awakened by the violence with which the door was closed; and Sir Sidney



Sidney conjuring me not to mention Mr. Randolph's death, lest it should overpower his mother, I sat myself down to brood in silence over my increased affliction.

The day passed, and my aunt continued dangerously ill; no news arrived, either of the physician or Edward Blagden. The symptoms of malady increased every hour, and every heart ached for the sufferer, except the marble seat of malice and revenge, which was hidden in the breast of the infernal Judith. As night approached, Sir Sidney became almost frantic. Lady Aubrey was still sensible; and, on Mrs. Blagden's quitting her chamber for a few minutes, she called me to her bedside. "Walsingham," said she, in a low and faltering voice, "perhaps, by the return of day, my wretched eyes will close for ever. In a small closet beyond the *houdoir*, adjoining my dressing-

ing-room, you will find an ivory cabinet. Mrs. Blagden knows not of it, she supposes the treasure which it holds destroyed:—it is your's when I am gone. All I solicit is, that, while I am yet permitted to prolong my miserable hour on this side the grave, you will forbear to examine its contents. Forgive me, Walsingham—forgive the weak and erring mortal, who, while the pang of death clings round her tortured heart, confesses her own unworthiness."

Sir Sidney fell upon his mother's bed, and wept like an infant. I had not power to make any answer. Lady Aubrey pressed my hand: Mrs. Blagden returned; and I, after dispatching a second messenger for a physician, retired to my chamber.

## CHAP. LXXXVIII.

AGAIN obliged to pass a night of solitary watching, I arranged my fire, and threw myself on my bed to rest my limbs, though my mind had little chance of repose. The loss of Mr. Randolph afflicted me deeply; and I lamented it the more, when I reflected that the event of Mrs. Aubrey's death had occasioned him to think, however justly, unfavourably of me. The approaching dissolution of Lady Aubrey did not fail to augment the melancholy prospects which crowded rapidly on my thoughts; while the mystery, which seemed to involve every part of the family history, placed divination beyond the powers of reason. The house, as on the preceding night, was perfectly quiet soon after I entered my chamber. The weather was serene, and the awful stillness which seemed to  
await

await the repose of nature, served rather to increase than to divert the mind from gloomy meditation.

Finding it was impossible to close my eyes, while my senses were all awake to rumination, I quitted my position, and began to traverse my chamber, as I had done during the preceding midnight. The recollection of the scenery from my window induced me to open my shutter, and to indulge once more that soothing sadness, which is affliction's mildest remedy. The whole aspect of the country was different from what I had last seen it. The moon shone brightly clear, and its beams were nearly vertical; the lake was rendered a solid body by a sharp frost, and the sky presented one vast concave of deep grey, except where the moon spread a wide ring of light, to a considerable distance from the luminous orb within its circle.

A scene more solemnly tranquil never met the eye of contemplation: my  
mind

mind was soothed more than depressed by the objects before me ; and I sat at the window near an hour, with my eyes fixed on the vaulted arch of boundless extent, where fancy might wander till frenzy arrested the career of ineffectual thought. The night air chilled me, and I returned to the fire-side, where I wrote the following

## S O N N E T.

'Tis NIGHT's dull reign !—The silver-mantled queen  
Sails on her ether throne through boundless air ;  
Her paly lamp, which trembles o'er the scene,  
Besits the sullen sadness of despair.  
The owl, her minstrel, on the leafless spray  
Shrieks to the cutting blast ; while spectres roam,  
Loathing their silent graves, till morning's ray  
Warns the wan phantoms to their beamless home.  
Yon mountain's brow, like the gigantic woe  
Which shadows my lorn breast, with tow'ring shade  
Frowns on the desolated vale below—  
Spreading impervious darkness o'er the glade :  
For these again returning Spring shall bloom,  
While Misery's child shall prove Despair's eternal  
gloom.



Again I returned to the window, where I had taken my seat only a few minutes, when a knock roused me from my reverie of sadness. I instantly darted towards the door, and hastily opening it, found my old favourite, Andrew, waiting for admittance. With a melancholy countenance he approached me: I inquired what brought him thither at so unseasonable an hour?—He closed the door, and advancing towards the fire, after a short pause, replied—“Gude troth, au is not weel, lad; the deevil’s emps are broke lose among the mountains, and the auld Blagden at the hede o’em. ’Tis na my business to tack pairt we the wecked, an I come to warn ye, lad, of your danger.”

“My danger!” repeated I. “What do you mean?—explain your words briefly, I conjure you.”

“Why,” answered Andrew; “did ye na ken an auld rusty sword that I left at your door last night?”

“I have

"I have it. For what reason did you leave it?" said I.

"Gude troth, an I left it, to arm you against your enemies," replied Andrew; "and you have mickle want o' sic a weapon, while ye tak up your reesidence in a hoose of Lady Aubrey's. I should be laith to scandalize any honest person, lad; for the murrain tak the promoter of conteension."

"Well, be brief, good Andrew," interrupted I.

"Why, then, I'll e'en teel you au I ken o'th business," said he. "The faucy loon, who has made himself laird o' Glenowen, is na gane to fetch a doctor; for, if I be living, I saw the raegamuffin only yester-night, an I followed him to the wee tenement at the fare end o'th hamelet."

"Are you certain that your conjectures are well-founded?" said I.

“As certain as that I belang to the clan of the Mac-Gregors,” replied Andrew. “O the de’il tak the ill-spoken lout. I ken him weel when I meet him; but he was mickle shy o’ me, lad:—an I had him i’th Highlands, I’d ge him as gude a dreeffing as ever braw Scot geed to an enemy.”

“At what hour did you see him?” said I.

“Just befare I brought the auld weapon for you to defeend yoursel, my bonie lad,” replied Andrew. “I watched him till a took shelter at the sign o’th Welsh deer at the bottom o’th hamelet.”

“At the goat?”

“A, that’s the hoose; an I’ll wager my mull against a poond of lawful money, that, an you have a mind, you may unkennel the fox befare day-light. By my troth, an I shanna be backward

in

in carrying a dirk in a gude cause. The Mac-Gregors be na given to cauld heartedness, when an honest lad has got into the claws o'th deevil."

As he spoke we heard the creaking of shoes along the gallery. "Hearken!" cried Andrew; "did ye hear nathing?"

"I did;—but it might have been the wind through this spacious building," said I.

"Nae, 'twas na the wind; but 'twas the witch that rides in't," replied Andrew. "I ken the step o'th haggard—saving your presence—as well as I ken the cloven foot of the auld one."

"Well, never fear," said I.

"Fear!—Gad's blude! was there ever a Mac-Gregor that was given to fear?—An you ken the battles o'Flouden and Dumblain, you'll find the whole clan as brave as lions, and as—  
Hearken, did ye na hear something?"

"Nothing, my good fellow," said I.

“ An there was one of my ancestors,” continued he, patting his leathern snuff-box, “ that was found we fifty gude stabs through his bonnet, and as many in his heart; an a never quitted his clan for aw that, lad—till deeth put an end to his valour, and left nathing but his fame to prove his legeetimacy. Now, as for this auld deevil——Did you hear nathing in the gallery?”

“ I thought I heard footsteps,” said I; “ therefore be brief.”

“ Gude troth, an I’ll tell you au I know when we meet again,” said Andrew. “ It winna be long, for I have mickle news to tell ye; an au aboot auld Mestress Blageden. I should be laith to breed any ill blude i’th famely, till I have packed up my alls and am jogging for the Highlands.”

At this moment my door was shook nearly off the hinges: Andrew turned pale.—I could not help smiling.

“ ’Tis



" 'Tis either a witch, or the deevil,  
or auld mestrefs——"

Again he was interrupted by a loud  
blow on the wainscot.

" We'll talk o'this another time,"  
cried the honest Scot; " mair hears  
than prudence ought to inform. Down  
i'th glen, near the wee gate which leads  
to the hamelet, I'll watch for you in  
about an hour. Do'na fail to come,  
an you wish to be guarded against your  
enemy."

Andrew opened the chamber-door,  
and, after peeping out to reconnoitre  
the enemy's post, stole on tip-toe up  
the stairs to his apartment, leaving me  
more bewildered than ever.

Day-light soon appeared, and I hast-  
ened to the place of appointment; eager  
to know the meaning of old Andrew's  
caution, so frequently repeated. I  
waited a considerable time, but no per-  
son came to satisfy my curiosity. I

strolled to and fro from the glen to the village, passing the little gate at every turn, and listening with eager inquietude. I had taken the rusty sword under my great coat, and the scene being solitary, I fell into profound meditation, almost forgetting the place, and the motive that led me to it.

I had passed more than an hour at this lonely spot, when Andrew came running towards me. His countenance was expressive of stern indignation, and his manner more alert than I had ever before seen it. I hastened to meet him; he was out of breath with the rage of his bosom, and the expedition of his feet. He entered the glen, and seating himself on the root of an old tree, began to unfold the trouble of his mind in all the bitterness of wounded pride, and all the scorn of dignified resentment,

I found that Mrs. Blagden had dismissed him from the service of Lady Aubrey,

Aubrey, and that, with such degrading epithets as the pride of a Mac-Gregor could not tamely endure. No reason was given for the sudden resentment of the tyrannical duenna, except that he was too apt to meddle with the private concerns of the family.

Andrew's agitation and evident distress affected my feelings. I considered myself in a great measure as accessory to his degradation; I attributed his being discharged from Lady Aubrey's service to the visit he had paid me on the preceding night, and the conversation that had taken place respecting Edward Blagden; while my regret was only to be equalled by the high opinion I entertained of his honesty.

My sorrow was infinite while I reflected that another object had been destined to suffer for an attachment to me and to my fortune. The kind-hearted Andrew wept tears of indignation; and while he

execrated the malice of his enemy, he rejoiced in having warned me to be guarded against mine.

“ I winna leave you, lad,” cried he. “ I’ll find a habitation at the hamelet, and watch ye weel, til the sculking loon is brought to shame; and then I’ll e’en jog bock to the Highlands. I canna come to more disgrace than to be cau’d a tractor—an auld, gude-for-nathing, pemping, begarly, oat-meal vagabond! The de’il tak the Jeezable an au the clan o’em! I’d rather peck theestles au my days than wear the badge o’ servitude we sic an auld Scareamouch.”

“ Be not too hasty, my good Andrew,” said I; “ Mrs. Blagden will not always be the tyrant of Glenowen. But where is the sign of the ‘ Welsh ‘ Deer,’ which you mentioned as the place of her nephew’s concealment?”

Andrew rose abruptly from his seat, and bidding me follow, hastened down the

the village. When we came to a small public-house, that had been opened since I had quitted Glenowen, I observed the Goat which was painted over the door, as an invitation to travellers. We entered and inquired after the landlord—he was not at home: I then demanded whether Mr. Blagden had been there during the last two days: I was informed that he had called for a moment, but his horse was kept in waiting, and he departed speedily.

“For what did he call?” said I.

“To bathe his arm, which was sprained, so as to become intolerably painful,” replied the servant girl.

“Why did he not apply for assistance at Glenowen?” said I.

“The young squire said that he was afraid of alarming my lady,” answered the girl.

“And how came he to sprain his arm?” said I, continuing the conversation.



"By opening the park-gate on horse-back."

"Had he no servant with him?"

"No; 'squire always rides alone about the manor."

"When do you expect the landlord to return?" said I.

"Not this fortnight.—He is gone to Hereford to buy cattle for 'Squire Blagden."

"Your master's name?"

"Davy Apprece, your honour."

Finding no chance of obtaining any satisfactory information from the simple girl, I walked with Andrew as far as the parsonage, where I left him, and returned to the manor-house to inquire the cause of his being so suddenly discarded.

## CHAP. LXXXIX.

I FOUND that during my absence the physician had arrived. He was with Lady Aubrey when I entered her chamber, and, by his looks, I perceived that her situation was as dangerous as I had before thought it. After giving directions for the treatment of his patient, and dispatching a servant with a prescription, he quitted the room. Sir Sidney with myself followed him to the saloon. Isabella, by a whisper from me, continued with Lady Aubrey; Mrs. Blagden stood sullenly dissatisfied during the physician's visit; and the scene of mystery seemed opening to a speedy elucidation.

We entered the saloon, and the door was closed. The physician's features

M 6

were

were settled by deep and fearful rumination.—He trembled to disclose that which he dared not keep a secret; I construed his lowering brow and hesitating manner, while they unfolded a page of infamy that made every nerve thrill with anticipated horrors.

I inquired whether Lady Aubrey was in any danger—he shook his head——“She may survive it,” said he with impressive regret; “but the chance scarcely amounts to probability; the symptoms are of an alarming nature—their origin unquestionably—poison.”

Sir Sidney leaned upon my arm, and seemed to lose the power of utterance—his face was pale, and every limb shook convulsively: my situation was little better. The physician looked earnestly at each by turns, and addressing Sir Sidney, continued—

“How or for what purpose it has been administered, Heaven only knows!

But

But I think it my duty to apprise you of Lady Aubrey's state, and of the means by which she is reduced to such imminent danger. The circumstance might have been accidental. Had the aid of medical skill been procured at an earlier period, the fatal consequences might have been prevented."

"Were you not requested by Mr. Blagden to visit Lady Aubrey?" said I.

"Never," replied the physician.

"Stay, I conjure you, stay with my mother," cried Sir Sidney: "This dreadful business must be investigated.—A parent's life, the reputation of innocence, and the punishment of guilt, are objects of too much importance to let the energy of justice slacken in inquiry."

"God forbid that I should charge any person with the crime of premeditated murder!" said the physician.

Sir Sidney's agitation was ungovernable—he conjured me to search the  
deep

deep and horrible attempt even to the most minute circumstance.

“ I did—I do suspect,” said he, “ an infamous concerted plan to destroy my mother ; but the suspicion was of such a nature, that, circumstanced as I am, it might have been placed to the account of malice.”

I urged the propriety of keeping our awakened vigilance as secret as possible. By any sudden shew of apprehension we should have afforded the criminal time to escape, and the enormity of the deed would perhaps have attached itself to an innocent object.

The physician remained with Lady Aubrey ; Sir Sidney and Isabella sat up in her chamber, and Mrs. Blagden kept close in her own apartment. I walked up and down the long gallery during a great part of the night, musing, and at the same time dreading to inquire whenever the smallest noise was heard in the  
house :



house: it was an epoch of horrors. The silence of the hour—the idea that Lady Aubrey's situation was occasioned by a domestic assassin, the worst of murderers—the story repeated by old Andrew—and the mystery of Sir Sidney's birth—occupied my thoughts, and bewildered them almost to madness. The crime of attempting Lady Aubrey's life seemed to rest between Mrs. Blagden and her nephew, Edward; which to accuse, or whether to charge both with its enormity, puzzled and perplexed me. I resolved, however, on the following day, to make some effort which should either authorize my suspicions, or exonerate the objects of them.

While I was with slow and cautious steps traversing the gallery, I heard at intervals deep and smothered groans, which, by their repetition, at length fascinated my attention. I stopped at the door of Lady Aubrey's chamber,  
and

and listened:—all within was as still as death. I again walked to the farther end of the gallery, and again the murmur of stifled agony fixed me to the spot. I entered my chamber, and opening the window, listened several minutes; the only sound that met my ear was the low whisperings of the wind among the leafless branches of the adjacent wood. While I was contemplating the moonlight solitude, I perceived something come forth from among the trees, and advance towards the manor-house. I drew back, still keeping my eyes fixed on the person, though concealing myself from his observation. He paced to and fro: I could only indistinctly see his figure, without being able to judge of his age, dress, or features.

After observing him some time, I armed myself with the ancient sword which Andrew had left at my chamber door, and was again proceeding along the

the gallery, when I heard several words inarticulately uttered in a tone of agony. I stopped:—the sound came from an apartment on the second story; a private stair-case led to it, and with caution I ascended. I now heard footsteps very distinctly, and the exclamation —“ Oh God!” frequently and emphatically repeated. Perceiving a light under the door, I ventured to try the lock, and it opened. The object who had excited my curiosity was Mrs. Blagden!—she was pale, and her eyes appeared swollen with tears. She started at seeing me, and, for a moment, seemed bewildered with amazement; but the natural and prompt malevolence of her heart quickly suggested the means of revenge. She seized me by the collar, and began to shriek, while she vociferated, “ Murder!” till the whole mansion echoed with the sound. The chamber was, in a few minutes, a scene  
of

of universal consternation. Mrs. Blagden held me firmly, and I was too much astonished to think of escaping. She protested, with the most awful and solemn oaths, that I had concealed myself in her chamber to destroy her; and the sword, which was found upon me, seemed to corroborate her asseverations.

Sir Sidney was overwhelmed with horror: Isabella wept, and lamented my rash conduct. The domestics united in execrating the enormity of the attempt, and Mrs. Blagden persisted in the accusation. "Fly!" exclaimed she; "oh fly, and procure some means to punish the villain!—the assassin!—the vile wretch!—who has long sought my life, and whose crimes deserve the justice of his Maker."

I was almost petrified with horror;—I could only articulate—"This sword was given to me by honest old Andrew;  
it

it was merely meant for my own defence."

"Against whom?" was the unanimous question.

"I know not," said I. "Send for Andrew, and let his evidence acquit me of the infamous charge alledged against me."

This assertion, instead of influencing my hearers in my favour, seemed a strong confirmation of guilt. Andrew had been dismissed from Lady Aubrey's service by Mrs. Blagden, and my bringing him as an evidence in my favour, conveyed an idea that he was an accomplice in the plan to destroy his enemy. Mrs. Blagden knew that a dark cloud of suspicion hung over her, and that the more she endeavoured to blacken my name with supposed criminality, the less my evidence against her would be credited in an hour of investigation.

A mes-



A messenger was dispatched to find old Andrew. I was now left alone with Sir Sidney and Isabella; their grief was scarcely utterable. They conjured me to make my escape, and not to brave the vindictive spirit which I had roused to vengeance against me. I protested my innocence; informed them how and when I had received the sword, with all the particular circumstances which Andrew had related. "Alas, Walsingham!" exclaimed Sir Sidney, "I wish to believe that you are innocent—I think you are; but the enemy you have to encounter is powerfully malevolent:—appearances are strongly against you, and, if you remain here, the consequences may prove fatal."

"If I depart, it will seem a confirmation of my supposed guilt," said I.

"Events may place Mrs. Blagden in a point of view that will, perhaps, acquit you," cried Isabella.

"Then

"Then I must await that period," said I firmly: "I have too long been the victim of appearances; it is time that the sombre shadow should be dissolved by the penetrating rays of truth; life has been a weary journey, and the sooner it is over the better. Send for an officer of justice—I demand a fair investigation of my conduct; I also insist that Mrs. Blagden be detained on suspicion of having poisoned Lady Aubrey."

Sir Sidney started, and trembled convulsively.—"Almighty God!" exclaimed he, clasping his hands and raising his eyes towards Heaven, "What a moment is this!"

"I now rung the bell—Sir Sidney closed the door and locked it.

"Walsingham, yet stay an instant," said he: "do not irritate the serpent whose sting will either annihilate my mother, or separate me from her in so perilous a situation; for my sake be patient; you

you know not the danger of provoking Mrs. Blagden. My dear but misguided parent may yet recover; she may live to render justice, to know the malice of her tyrant, and to repent of that fatal confidence which has produced these dreadful consequences. Would you, if it is Lady Aubrey's destiny to perish, embitter her last moments by the conviction that I am a vile, forsworn, deceitful monster?"

There was something so painfully energetic in Sir Sidney's voice and manner, that I was unable to answer him.

"Follow your cousin's counsel, I conjure you," said Isabella; "whatever you may suspect Mrs. Blagden as capable of committing, I do not think that she is guilty respecting Lady Aubrey. The absence of her nephew leaves but too dark an evidence of his criminal intentions."

A con-

A confused noise interrupted the conversation; it seemed to issue from the wood near the manor-house. I approached the window, and perceived a large throng hastening through the park towards the portico. Sir Sidney rushed out of the chamber, and Isabella fell senseless on the ground before me.

I soon discovered that the crowd, amounting to more than sixty persons, was composed of the peasantry in the neighbourhood of Glenowen. Mrs. Blagden had dispatched several domestics, in all directions, to alarm the country; and to report that I had attempted her life, and poisoned Lady Aubrey. The indignation of the rustics was fermented almost to frenzy;—they demanded the horrible delinquent, and menaced annihilation in ways as numberless as they supposed the crimes of the object which excited their revengeful purpose.

Sir



Sir Sidney expostulated with the enraged multitude from the steps of the portico. Their clamorous demands reached my aunt's chamber, and overwhelmed with terror, she fainted. Mrs. Blagden availed herself of this event; and, from the window, declared that Lady Aubrey was expiring. Sir Sidney was instantly overpowered; the people rushed into the hall, and, in a few moments, several of the most determined entered Lady Aubrey's chamber. Her death-like countenance, the shrieks and lamentations of Mrs. Blagden, Isabella's trembling form at the same moment feebly advancing along the gallery, and my horror-stricken features, seemed the incontrovertible evidences of a crime, at which my soul shuddered, while my tongue lost the power of pleading its innocence. I was instantly seized, my arms bound with cords, and, amidst the curses of the credulous rustics, con-



ducted to the village till a chaise could be procured for my conveyance to Abergavenny.

### CHAP. XC.

THE little Welch girl at the parsonage had made a bed for old Andrew, and he passed the night considerably soothed by the good humour and humanity of his evening associate. The messenger which I had sent, soon returned with my trusty friend, who fully confirmed all that I said in my defence respecting the sword, and the conduct of Edward Blagden. My vindictive accuser, notwithstanding, demanded justice, and the incensed throng still seemed sceptical as to the defence which I made, and which Andrew vehemently corroborated. All would not

do:—the multitude insisted on my departure, and every expostulation having failed to convince them, I at length consented to their wishes.

During our journey towards Abergavenny, the concourse of people augmented every mile, and, by the time that we appeared before the justice of the peace, some hundreds of persons were collected to witness the important examination. Upon a strict inquiry it was discovered, that there was not sufficient ground for my commitment to the county gaol; the mere assertion of Mrs. Blagden could not criminate me, and the fate of Lady Aubrey being yet undecided, I was permitted to return to Glenowen, after Andrew had made oath that her dangerous symptoms commenced previous to my arrival.

The tide of resentment now turned against Mrs. Blagden and her nephew. Every tongue was clamorously loud in  
menaces,

menaces, and every mind impressed with sorrow for the injustice of my accusation. Old Andrew, notwithstanding the affronts offered to the dignity of his family, resolved on returning with me to Glenowen; on braving the wordy storm of his furious antagonist, and on assisting me in bringing to justice the assassins of Lady Aubrey. We travelled with all possible expedition. On our arrival at the manor-house, we were met by Sir Sidney and Isabella; the former embraced me with the ardour of a friend, and the latter wept tears of joy, that recompensed me for all my sufferings. The physician was still with Lady Aubrey; she was considerably better. The event which had happened to me had been concealed from her knowledge, and Mrs. Blagden had never quitted her own apartment during my absence.

I again had a private interview with Sir Sidney and Isabella: I conjured  
N 2 them

them to take such steps as should bring those monsters to punishment who had attempted the destruction of Lady Aubrey. Still my cousin shuddered at the idea:—his agitation was terrible. He uttered every epithet in abhorrence of the vile perpetrators of an act so atrocious, and yet he had not resolution to investigate the mystery. His manner seemed to convey an embarrassment wholly abstracted from the present source of inquietude, and the dread of injuring Lady Aubrey predominated over that justice which was due to the enemies who had sought to destroy her. I could not form the slightest conjecture of my cousin's extraordinary motive: every word which I uttered, to enforce conviction of what I thought his duty towards a suffering parent, only augmented his perturbation. His grief seemed undissembled; his abhorrence of the deed, such as evinced the genuine humanity

humanity and filial affection of his heart. But there was yet a stronger, darker spell, which chained his tongue in silence, and which baffled the efforts of conjecture, while they palsied the hand of justice.

My honest friend Andrew remained at the parsonage. I was resolved to await the fate of Lady Aubrey; to investigate the cause of her illness, and then to quit Glenowen, however painful such a step might be to the feelings of my heart, for ever. Another night passed, and no ray of light yet elucidated the mystery. On the following day, Sir Sidney was unable to quit his chamber; the fatigue of watching, and the perpetual anxiety of his mind, produced a fever, and the physician began to apprehend the most fatal consequences. Orders were given that no person should see him except Lady Aubrey; and the manor-house was more completely a scene of sorrow than ever.



My mind, with a painful accuracy, revolved over all the scenes of past inquietude in which Sir Sidney had been the main spring of action. I recollected the wild, yet noble eccentricities of his youth—his liberal conduct towards Colonel Aubrey—his kind, his unaltered friendship for me—and his filial virtues, which prompted a mild and graceful forbearance under the rigours of maternal severity. Now that he was in danger of perishing, the victim of duty and sensibility, I beheld, with an unprejudiced eye, his many and distinguished perfections; all the jealousy of my heart respecting Miss Hambury had been effaced, as its aching fibres resisted and subdued the enthusiasm of affection. Friendship began to build a pure and sacred basis on the wrecks of a mistaken passion, while the delirium of the senses was lulled by the soothing return of reason.

Lady

Lady Aubrey recovered hourly, while Sir Sidney's fever increased till the most serious apprehensions filled every bosom except that of Mrs. Blagden. The same torpid indifference, the same hardened inhumanity—the horrible characteristics of a sordid, barbarous mind—were evinced, as during the recent peril to which Lady Aubrey had been exposed, for motives which yet remained secret and undefinable. I passed my nights in the most painful inquietude. My aunt, who had recovered sufficient strength to sit up in Sir Sidney's chamber during the day, was in a state of mind bordering on despair. Mrs. Blagden, in the *routine* of her occupations, frequently met me; but a sneer of hatred, or a malignant glance, was the only notice she bestowed; while I, with calm and well-founded contempt, neither shrunk at the one, nor paid attention to the other.

Adjoining to Sir Sidney's chamber was a small *boudoir*. The physician had positively commanded that no person except Lady Aubrey should be admitted to his patient during the crisis of a fever which hourly augmented, and which presented symptoms of the most dreadful nature. In this *boudoir* I had passed two nights, watching with trembling apprehensions, and dreading every moment to hear the last sigh of the generous and noble Sidney. Mrs. Blagden would frequently enter for a moment, and as suddenly depart; always bestowing some horrid execration on my devoted head, and menacing vengeance on all those whom she termed her enemies. Lady Aubrey never quitted the chamber of Sir Sidney, night nor day. A sofa was placed near his bed, and her attentions, mingled with agonizing sorrow, were unremitting.

On

On the third day of my cousin's illness, I received a message from old Andrew, requesting that I would without delay repair to the parsonage. I obeyed the summons, and, at the close of evening, met him hastening through the churchyard to bring me a letter, which had been sent by express from Mr. Hanbury. We returned to the parsonage, and, with a trembling hand, I broke the seal. Andrew would have prevented my reading the contents, and entreated that I would suffer my spirits to become more tranquil before I ventured to encounter a new trial. I closed the letter—paused a few moments—anticipated a confirmation of the fatal intelligence which had been communicated by the Welch girl—and concluded that Mr. Randolph's just resentment had wholly precluded me from any friendly wish in his last moments.

Andrew perceived the perturbation of my mind, and, snatching the letter from my hand, exclaimed—"By my sol, but you are as teemed as a woman. Ge me the paper, lad, and I'll tell ye au it contains; for I should be laith to see ye mak a loon o'yourself, and forget the deegnity of manhood by whempering like a baby. The de'il a bit are you worthy to be the friend of a Mac-Gregor, if you canna bear the brunt o'misfortune, as well as the sunshine of prospeerity. Wha can pretend to be faint-hearted, when they see the honour o'my famely blurred by the habit of a sarving loon? In gude troth, I am the first of my clan that ever disgraced his blude by wearing a levery."

As he pronounced these words he shed tears, which, in spite of all his efforts to suppress them, gave a contradiction to his words, while they evinced the gentleness of his nature.

After



After several minutes past in serious and painful reflection, again I ventured to open Mr. Hanbury's letter. It was hastily written, and contained only a few lines; stating, that, in consequence of Colonel Aubrey's earnest solicitations, Mr. Randolph, in his last moments, had forbore to alter his will, by which he had bequeathed the whole of his property, amounting to forty thousand pounds, "to be equally divided between Isabella Hanbury and Walsingham Ainsforth."

The letter dropped from my hand;—I had not power to speak. Such unexampled generosity to one whose conduct had forfeited every claim to his esteem, made a deeper impression on my mind than any act of persecution could have done. Indeed, Rosanna, so sensible was I of my own unworthiness, that I almost wished his rigour had been equal to my rashness; for the spring of compunction

never fails to flow when the source is touched by the power of generosity.

Andrew, after an effort which I could scarcely summon resolution to make, heard me read Mr. Hanbury's letter. When I came to that part which informed me of the last liberal action of a life which had uniformly done honour to humanity, the venerable servant burst into tears:—I could not proceed. "Take the letter and finish it thyself, my good Andrew," said I; "and when thou hast given vent to the sympathy of thy feeling heart, follow me to the manor-house. I will make thy peace with Lady Aubrey, and time will awaken thy enemy to compunction for the injustice of her conduct."

I hastened home, little exhilarated by the acquisition which my fortune had experienced, though deeply depressed by the anguish which I felt for the loss of such a patron as Mr. Randolph.

dolph. As I approached the manor-house, I perceived a carriage waiting at the portico, with a courier and two servants on horseback. On a closer view, I found that they wore the livery of Lord Kencarth. I hastened to meet my pupil, and flying across the hall, rushed into the saloon, where I found his lordship in conversation with Mrs. Blagden.

"Dash me, my hearty, but here I am again," exclaimed his lordship. "Fine news!—I'm dished—done up. The sharps have queered me; and, quiz my nobility, but Topas is a deep one. Would you believe it, tutor?—they have taken possession of Hanover-square; and, dash my sconce, if all is not gone to the hammer."

"I can believe that any calamity will follow the confidence which you placed in such a fawning, cringing vagabond," said I. "But remember that

I bid

"I bid you beware; I cautioned you not to trust him."

"Dish my wig, but there are at least a dozen putting in their claims for a share of the booty," replied his lordship. "There's Pannel the coachmaker, though my kencarth has only been finished three days;—and I received a letter just as I was quitting Bath from the old Duke, demanding payment of his ten thousand guineas, with a neat postscript to the same tune from my worthy friend the obliging Pimpernel. So you see, my dainty, I have nothing to do but to marry a golden dolly, or give my creditors the go-by, with a brace of barking irons. Now as you are my tutor, my deep one, and I am your pupil, queer my caxon if you shall not decide the business: bullets or a wife;—'tis all one to me;—only I should like to follow a wiser head than my own, and do the thing in stile."

bid I

"I trust

"I trust that there will be no necessity for either," said I. "The remedies are equally desperate; and, in either case, require some consideration. Shall I instantly set out for London, and endeavour to arrange matters so as to pacify your creditors?"

"Quiz my nobility, but Topas nicked the family plate, and has lumped it by this time, with my pink diamond into the bargain: sold the whole kit for six hundred, queer my sconce, and left me not a dish large enough to hold a deviled drumstick. Then as for Pannel, he has nabbed my kencarth, my highflyer, my tandem, and old Alltrap's landau into the bargain. There's your deep one! What say you now, tutor?"

I shook my head and was silent.

"This isn't the whole, my hearty," continued his lordship:—"They were all sported at Tattersfall's, along with my hunters, racers, roadsters, and my bit of blood



blood that used to walk me about the streets in the morning. Dash my wig, but all this didn't vex me. There's worse yet to come, tutor, queer my nobility."

"Indeed!" said I.

"My best polygraph is dead! dead as a nail, dash my jasey! died last Sunday. News arrived from Bath that I was down of a fever with little hopes of getting about again. Queer my sconce, if my polygraph didn't get drunk five nights following, till his pulse was up to a physician's. Quiz me, but old stiff-wig came a day after the fair; poor graphy was taken in, kept his bed three days, and hopped the twig on the fourth, queer my nobility! But this is not all, my deep one. Dash me, I was obliged to bury my ghost, lest he should continue to frighten the Dowagers, and set me down as a dead letter on the list of knowing ones."

“Had he no relations to perform that last act of kindness?” said I.

“Perhaps he had,” replied Lord Kencarth; “but they wou’dn’t have known him if they had seen him. He had been the polygraph of three different deep ones. First he was the walking shadow of an unpopular character; and personified his prototype, dish my jasey, to a miracle. But in his perambulations, his ears were so often affronted by sarcastic remarks, knowing observations, sharp hits, and queer truisms, that, quiz my nobility, but he shifted his shape, and, like a true grub, approached one degree nearer to insignificance. He next became the phantom of a noble Viscount; but it would not do; three fêtes and a court equipage dished his fortune, to the last guinea; while all the world laughed at him, and nobody respected either his taste or his prodigality. Men scouted him, women quizzed him, tradesmen

tradesmen dunned him; and, strange to tell, even his original was ashamed of his folly."

"Well," said I, sighing, for my heart was heavily laden with sorrow, though my ear listened to my pupil's incessant volubility; "well, let us leave such insects to the inevitable storms of fate, and think on subjects of more consequence. I have just heard of a dear friend's death, and my regret is infinite."

"I'm sorry for it," interrupted his lordship hastily; "but you shall hear what happened to my poor polygraph."

"Mr. Randolph was the worthiest of men!" said I.

"Very likely," cried my pupil; "but, queer my nobility, will you listen? I have a treasure in store for you, my hearty; dash my jasey if I am not your best friend after all. You little think what a deep game I have played to make your fortune."

"My

"My fortune! I do not comprehend you," said I; "pray explain yourself."

"When I have done my story," answered Lord Kencarth.

I nodded assent. "Well, go on," said I, knowing that it was impossible to put him out of his way.

He continued.

"The third person that poor Proteus undertook to personify, was a young Baronet. With a month's starvation, a crop, and four flannel waistcoats, he contrived to pass current among Jews, jockies, low women of all characters, and high women of no character at all; till having outrun the constable, and not knowing a flat that would give him tick for a shiner, dish my sconce but he was nabbed six times in one week;—did the deep ones with Jew-bail, till they were up to the trick: so, not having either the fortune or the honesty of his prototype,

type, he dabbled in trade, popped into the Gazette, and three months after started again with a new face, as my representative."

"The loss of such an appendage to fashionable notoriety must be terrible indeed," said I.

"Dish my jasey, but it is unlucky just at this moment," cried my pupil; "for as he shared the glory of the day, queer me, but he should have lived to partake of the disgrace. But this is not all, tutor; I have met with another misfortune almost as severe as the death of poor graphy!—Lady Alltrap is off!—off with old Heartwing, quiz my sconce!—She found that the sharps would dish me, and levanted without even bidding me farewell. So that now I have lost my reputation, been cheated out of my fortune, my polygraph dead, and my old girl deserted me, quiz my discretion,



discretion, but I have nothing left to console me except my bull-dog and my tutor. So if you have a mind to marry, and travel, the Dowager has promised me five thousand to pay expences. I have found you a wife;—my estate is out at nurse;—and I'm your neat pupil all the world over, queer my caxon."

"I will with pleasure attend you on your travels," said I. "The change of scenes will perhaps solace my mind, and strengthen your experience. But as to the wife,—you must pardon me;—I am in no haste to marry."

"O! but by all that is quizzical you must, tutor; I have made the bargain," said his lordship;—"a nice girl, with thirty thousand pounds, and as thorough-bred a neat thing as ever ran over the course of notoriety:—dish my jasey but you must have her: I promised her that I would do the thing in stile, and you cannot be off."

"I trust

“ I trust that you are not serious !” said I, “ for in my present state of mind it is impossible to think of marrying.”

I had scarcely uttered these words, when Miss Hanbury entered the saloon, leading by the hand the lovely, blushing, trembling Lady Arabella ! I started as though I had seen a spectre, while Lord Kencarth, giving me a sharp rap on the shoulders, exclaimed, “ What think you now, my hearty ?—Here she is, ready to leap into your arms : we have given Duchess the go-by, travelled post from Bath, and nothing is wanting now but a parson, dash my modesty.”

Lady Arabella would have quitted the saloon, but my pupil detained her : I had not power to utter a syllable, and the scene was perfectly ludicrous. After some moments, I summoned recollection sufficient to pity the distress which I had evidently occasioned in Lady Arabella’s mind by my cold reception of her ; and placing

placing my confusion to the account of sorrow, I made some awkward bows,—stammered out a few incoherent words,—expressed my gratitude, while I lamented her kindness, and took the first opportunity to quit the saloon; leaving the astonished trio to form their conjectures respecting my extraordinary conduct.

I hastened to my chamber, and, half bewildered with the perplexities of my situation, began to ruminate on a variety of plans, without resolution to fix my mind on any. I could not condemn the zeal of my pupil, though it had involved me in such a dilemma; I considered my conduct towards Lady Arabella as scarcely pardonable; for I now found by experience that I had played round a flame, which, though it could not warm my heart, had not only misled my judgment, but endangered my integrity. Another circumstance rose up in  
weighty

weighty proof against me. When I trifled away my hours of gallantry with Lady Arabella, I was piqued at Miss Hanbury's neglect,—and I was a beggar. Honour whispered to my mind, that though I could shake off the spells which her beauty, for a time, wound about my heart, the display of that indifference which succeeded my caprice, would, by the world, be misconstrued; and censure would not fail to place the sudden change to my increase of fortune, rather than to the decrease of my passion for Lady Arabella. Thus, in danger of being accounted fordid, in affliction for the loss of my dear friend, my curiosity awakened respecting the mystery of Sir Sidney's birth; and with something like a tender interest still struggling in my bosom for Isabella, I was by the imprudence of professions, made in the language of common-place gallantry, and by the mistaken zeal of a thoughtless friend, obliged

obliged to marry a woman, whose person I did not care for, and whose mind I scarcely knew. But I had gone too far to effect an honourable retreat, and was therefore obliged to surrender every hope, every prospect of future happiness. Yet even under the cloud of despondency, reflection paused to pity the wretched imitators of Proteus, whom my pupil had described: those mistaken trifling mortals, who, to gratify the false ambition of a moment, ensure eternal disgrace, while they make it the labour of their lives to copy those follies, of which the dullest among them would blush to be the originals.



## CHAP. XCL

THE dilemma in which I had now involved myself seemed to promise either indelible disgrace or perpetual penance. I had been led away by the *ignis fatuus* of the passions; the dazzling flame which plays about the senses for a time, and then vanishes into nothing, while the dawn of reason opens, and shedding a genuine lustre on surrounding objects, harmonizes the mind, and takes from it every thing deceptive. The brilliant graces of Lady Arabella, though they embellished the circles of dissipation, were of a species too gaudy for the tranquil scenes of life. Like the splendid illuminations of a ball-room, they glittered to the vacant eye of folly, while they banished all the train of sober enjoyments

joyments from the mind; enjoyments that are best felt in the calm shades of repose, the noiseless solitudes of unsophisticated nature.

Could a being, weary of the vicissitudes of fortune, disgusted by the duplicity of mankind, sickening at the very name of pleasure, and struggling with the strong impressions which memory had imprinted on his brain, be happy with such a woman as Lady Arabella, even with all her powerful attractions, her interesting graces, and bewitching vivacity? Impossible! One smile from Isabella,—one kind look or word of returning sympathy, would have triumphed over the united powers of all her sex, even if every individual possessed more than the charms of Lady Arabella. Yet, honour commanded that I should keep my promise. I had, in the warmth of a momentary caprice, offered my hand in marriage. She accepted

the proposal when I was a beggar, and I could not, when the smiles of fortune placed me above the misery of dependance, when she had deserted her family, and with voluntary generosity determined to bestow her person and fortune on me—I could not abandon her to the ridicule of the world; and to the humiliation which her self-love would consequently experience. The crisis of my fate was rapidly approaching; I had only this alternative—to bear the reputation of being a mean, capricious, sordid hypocrite, or to endure an eternal penance, for the impetuosity of my passions.

After an hour of agonizing conflicts, I determined on the latter. I resolved to expiate the long catalogue of crimes, into which my follies had so often led me, and to become the contrite husband of Lady Arabella. I returned to the saloon, where I found the lively fugitive, with

my pupil and Miss Hanbury: I endeavoured to assume the placidity of resignation: the solemnity of my manner was placed to the account of regret for the loss of Mr. Randolph, and the day passed in a gloomy series of thought, which even the eccentricity of my pupil could not enliven.

Sir Sidney continued extremely ill:—Lady Aubrey's constant attention, united to her anxiety of mind, impeded her recovery; yet she could not be prevailed on to leave my cousin's chamber, while by unremitting assiduity and sorrow she evinced a change of sentiment as unaccountable as it was honourable to her feelings.

Mrs. Blagden seldom quitted her own apartment: her seclusion originated neither in a sense of shame nor a pang of compunction: she courted solitude, to brood over mischief; and while she enjoyed the scene of present perplexity,

she anticipated the triumphs of approaching vengeance.

On the morning after Lady Arabella's arrival at Glenowen, I rose early, and strolled towards the parsonage, to see my old friend Andrew, who inflexibly refused to become an inmate of the manor-house while Mrs. Blagden presided as governess of the family. Passing the wood on the upper ground of the park, I met Lady Arabella: it was impossible to avoid her notice; she inquired whither I was going; and on my informing her that my visit was to the parsonage, she proposed accompanying me thither. We continued to walk hastily, till we came to the churchyard. I pointed out the grave of my mother; when I repeated the epitaph which was engraved on her tombstone, Lady Arabella dropped a tear,—it was the pure celestial gem of feeling, and her cheek never looked so lovely as at that moment.

On



On entering the parsonage, Andrew presented me a second letter which had just arrived from Bristol. I opened it with a sigh which I could not suppress, and read the contents. They informed me, that Mr. Hanbury only waited to attend the funeral of Mr. Randolph, after which he purposed setting out for Glenowen. He concluded his letter with these words: —“ Fortune has at length placed you above dependance, and happiness will now be within your reach, if the follies of the world have not contaminated the sensibilities of nature. There lives a being, Walsingham, whose affection has never ceased to sympathize in your fate; and whose virtues will, I trust, reward you.”

I read the passage over and over. A variety of conjectures crowded on my mind, each succeeding the other, with a rapidity that bewildered me. Lady Arabella observed the agitation which

the letter occasioned, and, with a degree of tender solicitude that increased my agony, conjured me to allow her that participation in my sorrows which friendship claimed, and which reason would hereafter sanction. "Can you refuse so natural a request to one who is destined to share with you all the future vicissitudes of fortune?" said she: "So united as we are by bonds of faith and affection, have I not a right to hope for that unbounded confidence, which will strengthen esteem, and lighten the load of sorrow under which you labour?"

I shuddered!—The gentle tone of her voice, and the generous language which it conveyed, seemed to proclaim me a wretch beyond the reach of consolation.

I conjured her not to distract me with her kindness,—hastily tore the letter, and, after a short conversation with Andrew, proposed returning to the manor-house.

As

As we walked towards the park, she again renewed the subject of her intreaties: "Indeed, Walsingham, your unkind reserve has humbled me so much in my own esteem, that I can scarcely believe myself worthy of your affection: why, with an opinion of my truth, so sceptical, why did you take such pains to fascinate my regard, and to produce a decision in your favour, which has exposed me to the censure of the world? I cannot return to my home: I dare not meet the resentment of my mother. I never would have consented to place myself under the protection of Lord Kencarth, had I not believed you sincere, as I knew him to be honourable. He assured me that your attachment to me had induced you to visit Bath."

"He told the truth," said I, awkwardly.

"Then how have I since forfeited that attachment?" continued Lady Ar-

bella. "Is it the temper of your mind to diminish in affection, in proportion as sacrifices are made to gratify your vanity? Oh, Walsingham! how unworthy of such a mind as yours is this levity,—this weakness! Leave the empty vanities of love to libertines and fools, and learn to value the female heart, in proportion as it encounters every misfortune with zeal and fidelity."

"I cannot defend myself.—I am the most criminal of mortals!" said I. "When I professed to adore you, my senses were fascinated by the beauty of your person. I now know the inestimable graces of your mind;—I respect, I admire them."

"Must I venture to build all my hopes of happiness on the icy basis of respect and admiration?" said Lady Arabella. "Must I rely on the fragile charm of what remembrance only presents, and hope to be beloved, because your senses were once  
fascinated

fascinated by the little boast of beauty which nature lent me?"

She blushed and trembled.—I knew not what to say.—Her chagrin, her evident distress, penetrated my soul;—I recollected the fate of Amelia Woodford;—I pitied the susceptibility of the female mind, and more than ever condemned the barbarous levity of my own sex, which suffers the head to dictate what the heart is incapable of feeling. This was the second instance of my folly, in supposing that I acted under the influence of passion, when jealousy and wounded self-love formed the real source of every thought that actuated my conduct. Amelia was the victim of my affection for Isabella. That dreadful sacrifice rose up in judgment against me; and I shivered with horror, while I shrunk with compunction.

After a pause of several minutes, Lady Arabella again addressed me.



"It is but too evident that my vanity deceived me," said she, sighing deeply; "my neglect of one who really adored me has proved that love is ever sure to punish his apostates. When I first saw you at Bath, I was engaged to marry him, who, piqued at my capricious conduct, is now the husband of Lady Aubrey."

"Edward Blagden!"

"Even so," replied Lady Arabella; "and to you I owe the loss of his affections: for you I have incurred the displeasure of my family, the censure of the world; and, as a punishment for my blind credulity, you consign me to the resentment of the one—the insults of the other. But I am told, that the diminution of your regard originates in the augmentation of your fortune."

"Who has dared to accuse me of such baseness?" said I hastily, and interrupting her.

"Mrs.

"Mrs. Blagden, Lady Aubrey's friend—the mother of the ill-treated, the rejected Edward," replied Lady Arabella, with a tone of proud disdain that stung my heart.

"Mrs. Blagden is a wretch beneath your confidence," said I. "It has ever been her pleasure to traduce my name, and it shall in future be my pride to baffle her malignity. The idea that you can suspect me of an interested motive has decided my resolution:—accept my hand, lovely Arabella;—would to God I were more worthy of your kindness! I am a frail, an insignificant mortal; but there is not in this weak, this inconstant heart of mine, one particle of avarice:—there is not, by Heavens, Arabella."

She smiled, and faintly answered—  
"I believe you. Think no more of my childish suspicions: I know you are incapable of deceiving me, and I will  
rely

rely henceforth implicitly on your honour."

This promise rendered my fate decisive. Her cheek wore the blushing smile of confidence, while my heart trembled at the sentence which honour had sternly pronounced against its future happiness.

In the course of the day, I revealed what had passed to Lord Kencarth. He commended my decision; and, as secrecy was not one of his good qualities, he speedily communicated the subject of our conversation to the whole family. Not an individual seemed satisfied with my choice: Lady Aubrey was more than usually melancholy, and Miss Hanbury frequently quitted the room to conceal her tears. I endeavoured to reconcile my mind to my approaching union with Lady Arabella: I made every effort to indulge the flatterer Hope; but the demon of Despair seemed to

menace

menace me through the tinsel veil of pleasure, and to predict the certitude of sorrow, amidst the proudest glow of anticipated splendour.

I passed a night without sleep; every moment was devoted to reflection; and all the events of my life again crowded in melancholy succession on those senses which were nearly annihilated by sorrow. Alas, Rosanna! how little did I know my heart when I supposed, that, because it was wounded by neglect, tortured by jealousy, chilled by contempt, and lacerated by compunction, it was shielded by disdain against the attacks of sensibility. I felt, at this trying moment, that the long-cherished and darling passion of my soul was not easily vanquished. I looked back on the sombre detail which memory presented, but I only looked to weep, and to lament that susceptibility which, in the moment

ment of remorse, menaced a new train of evils.

In a few days, I purposed giving my hand to Lady Arabella. I felt that I was unworthy of the confidence she placed in me, and trembled while I questioned the sincerity of my heart; yet there was no possibility of receding—my honour and my pride were at stake. I had trifled with the energies of reason—I had sacrificed them to the senses: I was an offender of the most culpable species—a plausible deceiver; who, with all the enthusiasm of Nature, had violated her laws, and boldly professed myself the disciple of folly and dissipation. The fatal moment, which gave Amelia Woodford to my ungovernable passions, was darkened by deception on her part, which, with rational minds, might plead in extenuation of my conduct; but there was no such  
subter-



subterfuge for conscious guilt in my seduction of Lady Arabella's heart—I rushed onward to the enterprise of vanity with my eyes open, my reasoning faculties awake: day after day, I pursued the phantom which flattered my vanity; and, divested of the enthusiasm of a heated mind, coldly, deliberately assailed her bosom, till its giddy inmate yielded to the strong magic of perseverance. From Miss Hanbury I had never received any proof of affection beyond that which she might have felt for a brother; Lady Arabella had set the world's opinion at defiance—quitted her home—offered me her splendid fortune—and, what was still more attaching than all these, had relied upon my honour. This reflection reconciled me to my engagement, and gave the amiable Arabella a decisive victory.

## CHAP. XCII.

I FOUND on the following morning, that Sir Sidney had passed a night of extreme danger: his fever augmented, and he refused every medicine which had been ordered by his physician. Miss Hanbury, on entering the saloon at breakfast, presented a countenance of sorrow; her eyes were dim with tears, and her cheek was pale for want of rest. Lady Aubrey made her excuses, and remained in my cousin's chamber. I several times entreated permission to visit the invalid, and was as repeatedly informed, that the physician left positive orders for no person except my aunt to enter his apartment. The day passed in anxiety;—Sir Sidney had not slept during the last forty-eight hours. He talked and raved incessantly, resisted all the consola-

consolations of maternal solicitude, and at length became delirious. In this dreadful and increasing alarm, Lady Aubrey wished to procure a small quantity of laudanum, in hopes, by administering it, to tranquillize his senses. She suggested the idea to Miss Hambury; it was by her communicated to me, and I hastened to find the phial of that subtle drug, which, in my despair, I had purchased at Bristol. It was still in my portmanteau, and I delivered it to Lady Aubrey, who instantly hastened with it to Sir Sidney's chamber.

In the evening, the physician again visited my cousin: his fears were visible in every feature, and the agony which filled the bosom of Isabella confirmed the danger of the noble and generous Sidney. Oh, Rosanna! my heart throbs, and my eyes are drowned in tears, while I proceed in my disastrous story. Another night passed in horror. The dawn  
again

again returned, and every breast still beat with apprehension:—the house was a scene of mourning. The few drops of laudanum, which Lady Aubrey had ventured to administer, had failed in the desired effect, and the irritation which they produced on the nerves of the sufferer augmented his malady:—every hope seemed to forsake us. The physician beheld no prospect of saving the ill-fated Sidney, and, with the prophetic command that the sufferer should be kept quiet, quitted his apartment with a countenance of mournful resignation.

The whole day passed in gloomy suspense: Sir Sidney had not uttered a syllable during the last twelve hours. I retired to my chamber at midnight, expecting that before day-break our despair would be complete:—all my former resentment was forgotten. The virtues, the sensibility of the liberal the generous Sidney, filled every heart with affection



affection and sorrow. I could in this momentous crisis find an excuse even for his conduct respecting Isabella.

I passed the melancholy hours till dawn-light in traversing my chamber; frequently opening my door, and listening when the least noise excited my attention. Just as day began to break, I heard Lady Aubrey's voice, and that of Isabella, as they stole across the gallery from one apartment to another. I could not account for their being absent from Sir Sidney, and, gently approaching the door of my aunt's room, I inquired how my cousin had passed the night. Lady Aubrey assured me that he was more tranquil, and had less fever; she attributed the change to the laudanum which I had given her, and I returned to my chamber with a heart considerably lighter than it was when I left it.

While



While I was entering my own room, I heard a door creek as it was gently opened, and, turning round to observe who was stirring, I perceived my aunt come forth, followed by Lady Arabella, wrapped in a loose *robe de chambre*, and scarcely awakened. They were at that end of the gallery which was farthest from my chamber, and I silently watched them, scarcely breathing with curiosity and astonishment. They entered the *boudoir* which led to Sir Sidney's apartment: Lady Aubrey seemed in earnest conversation with Lady Arabella; they closed the door with cautious timidity, and left me almost petrified with consternation.

I endeavoured to believe that this visit to the chamber of a man, who was the day before supposed to be dying, was merely the effect of compassion, in order to relieve Lady Aubrey from the  
fatigue

fatigue of watching. I knew that no person was permitted to advance beyond the *boudoir*, and that Miss Hanbury had been my aunt's companion during the early part of the night. I fastened my room-door, and, throwing myself on the bed, endeavoured to close my eyes. But the rumination of my brain was not to be tranquillized; the variety of perplexing thoughts that rushed across it, in melancholy succession, kept me waking, though feverish for want of rest, and exhausted by perpetual inquietude.

On the following evening, Mr. Hanbury returned from Bristol. I hastened to the parsonage the instant I was informed of his arrival, and he received me with that kindness which had marked his conduct during my infancy. With a mixture of pain and satisfaction, he unfolded the particulars of Mr. Randolph's legacy. We entered upon the melancholy subject of his death with  
sorrow

sorrow that was sincere, and regret that was poignant. But you will judge of my consternation, Rosanna, when he read the following passage in the will of my deceased patron:—"I bequeath the sum of twenty thousand pounds to Walsingham Ainsforth, to be paid within three months after my decease, upon condition that he marries my niece Isabella Hanbury. In refusal of this my last solemn injunction, the said Walsingham Ainsforth shall receive only the sum of ten thousand pounds; the remaining half to be paid to my nephew Walter Hanbury."

I was overwhelmed with confusion: my engagement with Lady Arabella was yet a secret to Mr. Hanbury, and my chagrin was infinite. The loss of ten thousand pounds could not affect me; Lady Arabella's fortune was treble that sum. But with the choice of my bosom—the darling of my youth—the  
first

first and dearest object of my affections—poverty would have been preferable to splendour, and a mountain hovel, the abode of that felicity, which the proudest palace of prodigality could not have bestowed, with any other woman.

With some difficulty I concealed my emotion till Mr. Hanbury concluded the last line of Mr. Randolph's will; when, folding the parchment, while he dropped a tear to the memory of departed virtue, he thus addressed me:—  
“Walsingham,” said he, “this liberal and earnest injunction of my generous uncle will, I trust, put a period to all your anxieties. There was once reason to believe that an union with Isabella could not possibly take place; another object, whose happiness was then at stake, so far influenced her mind, as to arm it against your merit, and her own inclinations. Time has, I trust, obliterated the impression of a young and

volatile fancy, and the sober dictates of reason will remove that bar which has hitherto impeded the completion of your wishes. Sir Sidney Aubrey——”

“Spare me the painful recapitulation of sad events,” said I, “the present moment is sufficiently replete with tortures.”

I could scarcely speak. After a conflict that wrung my heart, I continued—  
“Oh, my friend!—my earliest, and best protector!—how shall I learn to bear this new and agonizing trial of that fortitude which is almost wearied into feebleness by perpetual exertions?—The graces, the virtues of Isabella, deserve a better fate than that of her being wife to such a wretch as I am!—for you see before you the most ill-fated of mortals—the Pupil of Nature—the victim of prejudice—the heir to misfortune!—From my infancy I have been the dupe of false hopes and imaginary evils: I have alternately  
trusted



trusted the world, and been deceived by my credulity ; I have been guilty of crimes which my soul never meditated, and involved in ruin every individual that has made an effort to save me. I loved Isabella ;—I adored her. Years cherished my increasing passion, which months of disdain and persecution have not yet annihilated. Hope has wearied my senses into subjection, and I am now preparing to expiate my follies by a life of perpetual penance.”

“ I do not comprehend you,” interrupted Mr. Hanbury.

“ Would to Heaven Sir Sidney had never returned to Glenowen !” continued I ; “ or that Isabella had not loved him.”

“ The unhappy Sidney will not long survive a mother’s false ambition,” said Mr. Hanbury, sighing ; “ the ravages of silent sorrow are evident in his wasting form and dejected features. I am

painfully, delicately situated.—The forfeiture of half Mr. Randolph's legacy, by your refusing Isabella's hand, would enrich me, yet the union would render you completely happy. Were not this the case I should counsel you."

"How?—I solicit that counsel; I will endeavour to follow it," said I eagerly. "I am on the very precipice of fate;—one step will for ever destroy me."

Mr. Hanbury started from his seat, and walked hastily about the room. His countenance was expressive of the agitation which wrung his heart. "Walsingham," said he; "you are, indeed, the most persecuted of mortals—my heart bleeds when I retrace the progress of your sufferings; and it shudders while I anticipate those scenes which are yet to come. Isabella is the slave of friendship; her attachment to your cousin has been heroic and exemplary: it will

will only terminate with her existence; and that virtue, from which, I trust, no power could ever tempt her to deviate, will be fully proved when the grave shall close on the sorrows of Sir Sidney."

"Be explicit, I conjure you," said I. "If there is any mystery attached to the birth of my unhappy cousin, confide it in my bosom—trust to my honour, my secrecy, my gratitude."

Mr. Hanbury approached me; he looked as if he was going to unfold some secret of importance:—his countenance became convulsively agitated, his whole frame shook with stifled emotions, and he was afflicted even to tears.

"Why are you so importunate?" said he; "a few weeks will decide this dreadful business. Lady Aubrey will be prevailed upon to suffer an elucidation of events which now seem big with destruction. That fury, Mrs. Blagden,

is the origin of every misery, of every impending calamity that threatens the unfortunate family."

At this moment we were interrupted by Lady Arabella and Lord Kencarth, who came, by Lady Aubrey's desire, to request that Mr. Hanbury would immediately hasten to the manor-house. "Dish my jasey, parson," cried my pupil, "I thought you were come to Ainsforth's wedding; but, quiz my conceit, if I am not afraid it will be poor Aubrey's burying. The good fellow is upon the go; his life's not worth six weeks purchase—not a Jew in Duke's Place would do him for half the time. The dowager is almost frantic; so, queer my nobility, but you must come and preach her into resignation, while Walsingham settles the preliminaries with Lady Arabella. Quiz, my wig, doctor, what do you think of  
tutor's

tutor's choice?—A nice girl!—the neat thing—thirty thousand—and thorough bred, dash my jasey.”

Mr. Hanbury was lost in astonishment. Lord Kencarth was entirely a stranger, and his language wholly new to the ears of classical refinement. But even the singularity of manner and conversation, which distinguished his lordship, did not so complete the consternation of the moment, as the discovery that Lady Arabella was the object of my choice. The want of confidence on my part seemed to strike Mr. Hanbury's mind with considerable force, and he had but too much reason to place that silence to the account of selfish reserve, which, in reality, originated in my fear to give him pain. His looks strongly indicated resentment—my grateful esteem took the alarm which was given to friendship; while, taking his hat, Mr. Hanbury

P 4

abruptly



abruptly quitted the room, and set out for the manor-house, to obey the summons of Lady Aubrey.

“Dash my purity, but there goes a rum one!” exclaimed Lord Kencarth, as Mr. Hanbury walked with his eyes bent on the ground, down the little path which led towards the churchyard. “Why, tutor, quiz my learning, did this fellow furnish your garret?” cried Lord Kencarth; “why, all the merchandize of his brain does not seem worth the catalogue that nature has given in his features! Queer my mazzard, if he is not a walking *memento mori*! cross bones and a skull!—an animated tomb-stone, without a single line on his phiz to give him a good character. Why, he looks like a musty folio in a black binding;—full of learning, and only fit for the cold regions of pedantic obscurity. Dish my jasey, but you were in the right to levant, my hearty.”

I was

I was too painfully perplexed to pay much attention while my pupil was speaking. Lady Arabella expressed her concern at my inquietude, and though she had little reason to approve Mr. Hanbury's abrupt departure, her respect for my feelings prevented her giving an opinion which she suspected would augment their irritation.

We returned to the manor-house: on our arrival we found that Sir Sidney was sleeping. The physician had just left his room, and some hopes were entertained, that a few hours rest would lower the fever which oppressed him. Ifabella continued to attend Lady Aubrey in the *boudoir* adjoining my cousin's chamber; and Mr. Hanbury's acute distress was visible to every observer.

## CHAP. XCIII.

ANOTHER day passed, and at the close of evening I strolled towards the village. The sky was clear, and a cutting frost augmented the sharpness of the wind that descended from the mountains. An opening which led towards Abergavenny broke the towering amphitheatre of nature which nearly encircled Glenowen, and the setting sun threw a deep crimson hue on the horizon, the warmth of whose colouring but little accorded with the freezing atmosphere of a winter twilight.

I continued to wander along the skirts of the valley, till the west shut in, and I could scarcely discern the prominent features of the landscape. As I hastened homeward across the park, I

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observed

observed a man at a small distance keeping an even pace with me, till we came to a nook peculiarly lonesome and rugged, owing to the torrents which had passed over it in their descent from the mountains. Here he stopped. The obscurity of the place rendered every thing indistinct; but the sound of his footsteps suddenly ceasing, I hurried towards the spot where I concluded he waited to receive me. I had no weapon of defence but a strong oak stick: the sky every moment became more dark, and the solitary corner being overshadowed with firs, the gloom was deepened while it gave additional security to the suspected wanderer.

I advanced, and the lurking assassin entrenched himself behind a jutting grotto which was erected as an object of perspective from the south wing of the manor-house. I stole slowly and with

caution towards his hiding-place. He would have retreated.

"Discover yourself," said I, "or expect no mercy."

"Keep off," replied the incognito, "for I am armed: if you approach, you perish."

"Do you wish to rob me?" said I.

"No," answered the stranger firmly.

"Am I known to you?"

"You are," said he. "But if ever I am tempted to assault you, it will be in my own defence."

"Have I ever injured you?"

"That is a question which I am not obliged to answer," said he. "Depart; do not urge me to destroy you. Again I repeat the word,—depart."

The tone in which he spoke was rather that of entreaty than of menace. I knew not how to account for so strange an adventure. The voice seemed familiar



miliar to me.—I kept my eyes fixed on the shadowy nook, and expected every moment that he would rush forth to put his threats in execution. Several minutes had elapsed in total silence, when he again addressed me:—

“Remember the unfortunate Linbourne, and—begone.”

“Linbourne!” repeated I, with new anxiety which was blended with horror, “what of him?”

No answer was returned, but I distinctly heard, “Oh God!” murmured with an agonized sigh. The tone was similar to that which had met my ear a few nights before in Mrs. Blagden’s chamber. I listened attentively;—the moon began to rise;—the firs waved to and fro with a low whispering sound, and the coldness of the air was scarcely supportable. Still I determined not to quit the spot, under the anxiety which the stranger’s words had occasioned. I continued

tinued to walk hastily, measuring a short space, near the nook of concealment. Again, a stifled murmuring tone of ejaculation aroused me, and again I stopped to listen. I now saw the form of my companion standing near the entrance of the rude grotto. His figure appeared to be tall; but it was impossible to discover his age or features. "Mr. Ainsforth," said he, "do not attempt to approach me. I am desperately situated. I know you;—we have met on less mysterious occasions:—you believe that I am dead; and you think yourself the cause of my destruction. There are reasons why nature would palsy your hand, were it raised to annihilate me; therefore do not attempt that, which would inevitably be the cause of your own perdition."

"Are you Lord Linbourne?" said I, with a mixture of hope and agitation. The stranger returned no answer. I advanced

vanced a few paces towards the niche. "Your temerity will be fatal to you," said the unknown person: "the moonlight will render you a distinct mark, while I am shrouded in the shadow of the mountain. I have pistols;—they are loaded. Within this grotto I have two armed associates."

I continued to ascend the short acclivity, when a female shrieked horribly. I started back, and a voice which I instantly knew to be old Andrew's, called to me from the low-ground of the park. I hastened to meet him, still keeping my eyes on the spot where the stranger had entrenched himself. It was impossible for any persons to escape without our seeing them; and after dispatching Andrew to alarm the domestics, I concealed myself amidst a clump of firs, to watch the movements of the enemy.

Every

Every moment seemed an age till Andrew's return. There remained not a doubt in my mind, but the stranger was Lord Linbourne :—and still I was unable to guess the reason of his visit to Glenowen. The distance between us while we conversed was not more than twenty paces ;—that of my removed post, somewhat more than an hundred. I waited with a degree of impatience that was torturing :—I heard the stranger whistle three times, and a buzzing of voices followed the signal. The moonlight fell on the grove of firs beneath which I had taken refuge, but the side of the mountain was still in shadow. I had waited near a quarter of an hour, the concealed person not yet choosing to venture from the nook, when I observed old Andrew, with four companions, hastening across the park at some distance. The incognito, seeing them also, rushed

rushed forth from his hiding-place, taking the narrow path along the side of the mountain with incredible velocity : I followed till I lost sight of him. It was in vain to pursue the fugitive farther : the route which he had chosen led to the high road, where, I concluded, he had horses in waiting for him and his companions.

We now returned to the dark nook in search of the female, whose shriek I had heard on my ascending the acclivity. We entered the grotto, and searched every niche of concealment, but nothing living was to be found. The domestics, who had armed themselves for a terrible rencontre, laughed heartily at what they considered a false alarm ; and I returned with considerable chagrin towards the manor-house, while Andrew measured back his weary steps to the parsonage.



## CHAP. XCIV.

So deeply was I wrapped in thought, that I scarcely felt conscious which way I was going, till I arrived at the portico. I was undecided in opinion, whether or not I ought to reveal what had passed at the foot of the mountain, till I had taken farther steps for the discovery of my secret visitor, whose motive was as undefinable, as his words and energetic entreaties were strongly impressive. With curiosity so awakened, it was impossible for my active spirit to remain tranquil: reason and nature whispered, that to investigate the business was incumbent on me, for a variety of motives; and, thoroughly persuaded that the concealed wanderer was no other than Lord Linbourne, I could not rest under the suspense and astonish-

astonishment which his appearance had excited.

However deeply my thoughts were absorbed by what had recently happened, on my arrival at the manor-house, the first idea which roused me from my reverie, was that of Sir Sidney's precarious situation. I found Lord Kencarth awaiting my return in the saloon; he was alone; and the information which he gave, tending but little to satisfy my mind, I repaired to the *boudoir*, adjoining my cousin's chamber, to repeat my inquiries. Fearful of disturbing the invalid, I opened the door with caution, and softly entered. I found no person whatever in the usual place of unremitting attendance;—no light but that which the fire supplied; while, by the universal desertion which marked the scene of former solicitude, I concluded that Sir Sidney was asleep and better.

I now

I now hastened to Lady Aubrey's apartment, and found that also empty. Surprise began to give the alarm which my senses were ever open to receive, and I again repaired to the *boudoir*. As I gently opened the door, I heard a low humming sound in Sir Sidney's chamber. I approached the threshold to inquire after his health, when my ear distinctly caught the tone of Lady Arabella's voice. I started. "Dearest Sidney," said she, with an accent of the most impressive tenderness, "set your mind at ease, and endeavour to support your spirits for the sake of those that love you. Had you declared your sentiments at an earlier period, believe me, I never should have thought of Mr. Ainsforth." I was almost petrified with astonishment.

I heard my cousin reply in language so inarticulate, and with a voice so feeble, that

that the words only conveyed a mingled murmur, which left me as much in doubt as ever.

After a pause of two or three minutes, Lady Arabella continued: "Why conceal your sentiments from your cousin?" said she: "I entertain so high an opinion of his generosity, that I make no doubt but he would instantly relinquish his claims to my hand, if he knew that your repose would be the forfeit of our union. His cold reception of me gave evident proof how little I am necessary to his happiness: and since you have done me the honour to declare your wishes, I shall not hesitate to break my engagement finally."

The sensation that rushed through my heart when I heard her utter these words was undescribable: it was a conflict betwixt joy and wounded pride.—The loss of Lady Arabella was an event desirable, in my perplexing state of mind; and yet  
I felt

I felt piqued at the reflection that Sir Sidney Aubrey was again my rival.

I now heard Lady Arabella rise from her seat, and draw the curtains of my cousin's bed. "Heaven preserve you," said she, "and inspire your heart with that confidence in my sincerity, which I will never fail to merit. With this assurance, endeavour to compose your mind."

Here she paused, as if to embrace him. My cheek was flushed with a momentary glow of resentment; but it passed away, and I felicitated myself on my escape, more than I lamented her inconstancy.

I descended to the saloon, in hopes to find Miss Hanbury, to whom I longed to communicate the purport of my discovery. I recollected the conversation which I had heard in the wood, on the fatal night of my rencontre with Sir Sidney: his professions of eternal faith, and



and Isabella's foolish fond credulity. I found the saloon empty; and full of the important triumph which possessed my mind, I waited impatiently near a quarter of an hour, in hopes that supper would be served, and the family assembled. A thousand anticipated sources of fair retaliation seemed to burst forth on my exhilarated fancy; and while I cursed the inconstancy of the sex, I felt delighted by the hope of detecting and humbling the vanity of Miss Hanbury, while I exposed the duplicity, and rejected with scorn an alliance with the trifling, capricious Lady Arabella.

I discovered nothing new in the character and conduct of Sir Sidney Aubrey. I considered him as one of those beings who love without feeling, and change without remorse: whose vanity forms the basis of every triumph; and whose conquests pass like pleasing dreams over the senses, neither disturbing the tranquil

quill scenes of existence, nor influencing the passions by one transient pleasurable moment. All the inquietudes of love which seemed to invade his breast, I considered as proofs of his refinement in deception: and the more he proved himself the master of his art, the less I considered him as entitled to my pity.

Another quarter of an hour elapsed, and I began to grow more impatient. I rung for a servant, and inquired after Lord Kencarth:—he was no where to be found. I then dispatched him with a message to Miss Hanbury:—she was also absent.

Lady Arabella now entered the room;—with an air of easy effrontery she inquired how I felt myself after my evening walk. “The weather is intensely cold,” cried she.

“Almost as cold as women’s hearts,” said I.

“But

"But, I fear, not quite so changeable," retorted her ladyship.

"There is little merit in boasting the imperfections of Nature," said I; "yet women will sometimes vaunt those traits which men would be ashamed of."

"It is no uncommon thing," replied Lady Arabella, "for your sex to condemn the very precepts you inculcate. The heart of a modern lover is sufficiently torpid to petrify even the soul of sympathy. I wonder how the torch of love continues to burn at all in such regions of inanity."

"You are sarcastic, Lady Arabella," said I, with assumed *nonchalance*. She smiled, but made no answer. "Well!" continued I, with a sigh of resignation, "you are right, I believe:—this world has little pleasure for a heart of sensibility; and those who are most gifted with apathy are the likeliest to be

tranquil. For my own part, I never mean to feel again. I will abjure the very name of love, and for the remainder of my days become an anchoret."

Lady Arabella did not seem pleased with this declaration, because it deprived her of the triumph which she anticipated in refusing me her hand. I was apprehensive that I had piqued her vanity too far; and that she would break her promise to Sir Sidney, merely for the gratification of punishing my apostacy. She reddened with offended pride, and was on the point of shedding tears. I varied the topic of conversation,—talked of the weather, an everlasting subject for animadversion when the moments are prolonged by *ennui*: I then lamented the indisposition of Sir Sidney: this opportunity was too precious to escape Lady Arabella's notice, and she began with most feminine resentment to expatiate on the personal graces and mental virtues

virtues of my cousin. I knew her motive, and that knowledge defeated her purpose. Every word she uttered was confessed with reiterated praise, and new encomiums, more lavishly bestowed, than readily acknowledged.

"He is the handsomest creature breathing!" cried Lady Arabella.

"Agreed," said I.

"The most amiable!" continued her ladyship.

"Unquestionably!" added I.

"Accomplished beyond description!" cried Lady Arabella.

"And good-natured—almost to a fault!" interrupted I.

My fair friend began to grow angry:—her cheek half smiling between resentment and contempt, changed colour, as the circulation was influenced by the sensations of her mind.—"I am astonished," said she, with a glance of marked disdain; "I am really astonished,



ed, that such a model of perfection should not have rendered all his associates perfectly amiable."

This reproof did not mortify my self-love: Lady Arabella's evident partiality towards Sir Sidney Aubrey, and the conversation which I had overheard in his chamber, completely chilled the ardour of a passion, which originating in caprice, was ever susceptible of a remedy.

The fair inconstant waited some time to see if her declarations excited the desired emotion in my bosom; for though she had predetermined to break her engagement, she could not bear the idea of my meeting her wishes more than half way. She tried every art of coquetry to rouse my feelings, and to pique my pride; but finding the strong bulwark of conviction too powerfully armed by resolution, she had recourse to all the light artillery of disdain. She smiled,  
while

while she bit her lip with vexation; and hummed a tune, while her eyes were glazed with tears of resentment. Had I not witnessed proofs of her falsehood, and heard the language of infidelity falling from her own tongue, I should have pitied her distress, and execrated my own versatility. But the dying embers of affection, if they once resist the breath of jealousy, will rekindle no more; though its latent sparks may undermine the heart, and, by slow degrees, consume the last atom of expiring friendship.

After a considerable interval of sullen taciturnity, Lady Arabella renewed the subject of panegyric. "I trust and hope that the beloved and amiable Sidney will yet live to ornament this world of insignificance," said she. "Heaven knows how sincerely I should lament, how tenderly Miss Hanbury would deplore the loss of such a mortal."

The conclusion of this remark pierced my bosom acutely. Lady Arabella observed the rapid revolution of my feelings, and did not fail to follow the impulse which prompted her to awaken them. "Even her regard for Lord Kencarth does not exclude from her bosom the justice of admiration," continued she; "and though her affections may be his lordship's, her friendship is still due to the virtues of Sir Sidney."

"Unquestionably," interrupted I; "and every sensation, which so pure a heart as Isabella's may feel, will be prompted by good sense, and sanctioned by discretion; for *she* is above the folly of caprice; *she* is too proud to court that esteem which she does not hope to render reciprocal."

"Were you always of this opinion?" cried Lady Arabella, drawing on her glove with the acerbity of vexation.

"There

“There have been moments when I condemned Isabella’s conduct, when I thought her an empty, vain coquet,” said I, “but even follies become trivial by comparison with faults of greater magnitude; and we are induced to tolerate the errors of friendship, though we shrink with repugnance from the treacheries of love.”

“What do you call the treacheries of love?—it is a fine romantic word,” said Lady Arabella, endeavouring to laugh: “but those who are most prone to rail against treason, are frequently themselves the most atrocious traitors.”

I comprehended the oblique censure; but it failed to provoke an explanation, which I reserved for a more important crisis. Lady Arabella’s conduct in Sir Sidney’s chamber authorised my resolution, and I determined not to marry her, let the consequences be ever so fatal. So easily may we find a pretext

when we wish to violate the bonds of affection.

Another half hour had passed in that sort of conversation which, however incomprehensible to the cynical, or trivial in the opinion of the wise, was perfectly consistent with the awakened resentment of two capricious lovers; for, to confess the truth, I believed Lady Arabella's attachment to me was formed on the quicksand basis of vanity, and that of the very worst kind—the vanity of universal conquest. She had arrived at an age when a lover was an indispensable appendage to fashionable notoriety; and as the duchess, her mother, did not yet think it time to relinquish the myrtle wreath in favour of her lovely epitome, the lively Arabella traversed the *parterre* of busy life, firmly resolved to decorate her own bosom with those trophies of conquest, which she had little hope of wresting from the brows of her



her maternal rival. It was a just remark of an enlightened author\*, that one of the most perplexing situations for the female heart is that where the daughter bloomed before the mother began to fade. The many instances which we meet with in fashionable life corroborate the observation; and to this circumstance may be attributed the spirit of rivalry, which often kindles a flame to destroy those fine sensibilities which should cement the dearest of all human connections—that of child and parent. Thence it is, that we see beautiful grandmothers disputing the palm of victory with their no less lovely daughters, who, in haste to prove the folly of their parents, by becoming early mothers, in their turn lay the foundation for future hours of domestic inquietude. Such was precisely the situation of Lady Arabella; and such will be the consequences

\* Doctor Johnson.

of early marriages, till Time shall take his last flight over every scene of human vicissitude.

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## CHAP. XCV.

I BEGAN now to feel some degree of uneasiness at the absence of Isabella and Lord Kencarth. The time of night, and the impropriety of the event, no less astonished the greater part of the family. The manor-house was searched from the roof to the foundation; several persons were dispatched to explore every avenue of the grounds: others hastened to the parsonage, while I, with a mind equally a stranger to hope as to fear, set out to make inquiries at the neighbouring village.

I observed, amidst the general confusion, that Lady Arabella was provokingly

ingly serene. Mrs. Blagden had also absented herself from the manor-house, and nobody knew her motive for so doing. These circumstances, combined with Isabella's departure, puzzled and alarmed me: still I hastened towards the village, and still my heart palpitated with impatience and solicitude.

It was now past midnight. The weather had become cloudy, and a drizzling rain fell fast upon the mountains; the wind was rising, and the haze rendered every object indistinct. I traversed the park without meeting with the slightest interruption. I again passed the grotto, and the nook which had concealed the mysterious stranger:—all was quiet, and I at length reached the village. The first place I flew to was the public-house—the surest scene of intelligence in an obscure hamlet; for it is there that the wants of the little, and the follies of the great, are investi-

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gated

gated with that freedom of speech which is the birthright of mankind, and which was once the pride of a degenerated people.

When I reached the sign of the Goat, I observed lights in most of the windows; which led to a conclusion, that the family was not yet in bed. The singularity of this circumstance, at so late an hour, inspired my breast with hopes that I should obtain some intelligence respecting the fugitives. The idea of Lord Linbourne strongly possessed my mind, and a thousand dreadful conjectures followed as rapidly as thought. I entered the lower room, where I found the servant girl whom I had seen on my last visit. She started, and became suddenly as pale as ashes. I made her a signal not to speak, by pressing my finger on my lip, and, at the same time, grasping her arm with impressive firmness. She trembled, fell upon her knees

before me, and, bursting into tears, with a low voice conjured me not to betray her. "Then there is something to divulge?" said I. "Be quick, or you shall repent of your secrecy."

She now perceived my pistol—for I had thought it prudent to arm myself; it was in my hand, which, till that moment, I had kept behind me.

"I have promised not to tell:—but ask your questions, and I will answer them by signals," said the girl.

This species of prevarication is not uncommon with vulgar minds; and, in the present case, I was glad to avail myself of it. Time was precious:—I heard voices in the apartment up stairs, and the girl began to tremble more violently than ever.

"What persons are in the room above?" said I.

She held up two fingers.

"Two persons?"

She



She nodded assent.

"A man and a woman?"

Again she inclined her head.

My impatience would not wait to ask another question, but, darting by her, I ascended the stairs with frantic impetuosity.

On my approaching the door the girl shrieked. I heard some person suddenly lock it, and again a low humming sound of voices convinced me that I was not mistaken. "I request to speak only five words with you," said I. "The whole country is alarmed, and in search of you. This absurd conduct will only expose you to insult, and excite the resentment of Lady Aubrey. Be advised;—I come as a friend, as one who now sees the folly of his past perseverance, and only wishes to bid you an eternal farewell."

I listened—but all was silent as the grave. I dared not violate the laws of propriety

propriety by forcing the door, and yet I had not resolution to depart. "Come, come," continued I; "this is folly. Open the door only for a moment; I am determined not to leave this spot till I have seen you—only for a moment:—one word—to bid you adieu for ever."

Rosanna, the ever predominating, the rash thought, which had so often contaminated my mind, at that instant grew terribly seductive. The pistol was loaded;—I raised my hand towards my head, when the servant girl, who had followed unseen by me, grasped my arm, and, suddenly turning the instrument of death, in the struggle, discharged it through the door of the chamber.

A loud shriek followed the explosion, and immediately after I heard the casement opened. I leaped the whole flight of stairs, and hastened to the front of the

the house just as a female was escaping from the window. On seeing me she drew back; the lights in the room were extinguished. I was mad with rage and disappointment, and again ascended the staircase; where I felt myself seized by the throat, while a stern voice exclaimed—"Rash Walsingham!—why continue to seek your own destruction? why wish a second time to stain my soul with blood?—Begone, your life is in my power. I am armed;—the blade now trembles in my hand with which I can annihilate you."

"Then strike," said I; "for, by the Eternal Powers, I never will quit this spot till I am satisfied."

He continued—

"I have not resolution to murder you. Nature clings about my heart, and bids me yet be merciful. Oh God! why, why do you seek to know me?—

The

The fatal secret will wring your breast. Begone;—I once more conjure you to begone.”

I endeavoured to grapple with him, while I called loudly for a light. The affrighted girl had flown to alarm the village, and I had no resource but the little strength which astonishment and despair had left me.

We wrestled for some moments. My antagonist was athletic, but guilt and terror enervated his limbs, and, after a severe struggle, I overpowered him.—He fell.—“Oh God!” exclaimed he, with an agonized voice; “my own accursed knife has penetrated my breast. Fly, Walsingham;—save yourself—for I am murdered.”

I reeled down the stairs;—there was no light in the lower room, except that which was afforded by a small wood fire:—I rushed out of the house. As I passed the threshold I heard a deep groan,  
and

and faintly discerned a female stretched on the ground beneath the window. The dangers of my situation seemed to augment every moment: I would have stopped to raise the wretched sufferer, but the idea of having already committed murder bewildered me with horrors; and with tottering limbs I hurried towards the manor-house. Such an hour I had never before experienced. My whole frame was convulsed—my mind maddened; while the spacious vault of Heaven that hung over me seemed as dark as the internal hell which filled my bosom. I crossed the park with my eyes almost starting from their sockets; every step seemed to tremble on eternity, and every breeze that moaned over the mountains, in fancy whispered approaching dissolution. I rushed into the portico, and, without stopping, entered the saloon where Lady Aubrey and Mr. Hanbury  
were



were waiting impatiently for my return. The lights presented an object which made humanity shudder! My face was pale,—my hair dishevelled,—my waistcoat torn open,—and my breast bathed with blood.

Lady Aubrey, concluding that I had destroyed Lord Kencarth, sunk powerless on a chair:—Mr. Hanbury, strongly impressed with horrors, had not resolution to inquire the cause of my disordered looks, and I fell into his arms, which had scarcely strength to support me.

## CHAP. XCVI.

BEFORE I had time to explain the dreadful event which had taken place, a messenger, out of breath with speed and terror, arrived from the village, demanding instantly to speak with Lady Aubrey. She quitted the saloon, faint and trembling. Mr. Hanbury's fears anticipated the destruction of Isabella, and the anguish of his mind was undescrivable. I still leaned upon his shoulder; I attempted to speak—my lips quivered—my voice faltered—and the fruitless effort proved, more strongly than language could have done, the torture of my soul, the magnitude of my despair.

In a few moments Lady Aubrey rushed wildly into the saloon—"Save! Oh! save yourself, unhappy Walsingham!"

ham!" said she, "and escape, while you have yet time. Your life will be the forfeit of your rashness,—for you have murdered Edward Blagden."

"Murdered!" repeated Mr. Hambury, shrinking almost to the ground. Lady Aubrey continued addressing him: "The villagers are alarmed, but they know not who has perpetrated this horrible deed. Walsingham's situation will fix the guilt on him;—entreat, O! entreat him to fly!" Then clasping my hand, she threw herself upon her knees before me.—"Alas! unhappy and neglected child of my dear dead sister, I have been the cause of all thy crimes!" said she. "For my cursed avarice has driven thee on to this last dreadful act of desperation." She hung round me in an agony of tears. She kissed my trembling hand, and bathed it with the torrents which flowed from her wild and starting eyes.

"Oh!

"Oh! my poor Sidney," cried she,  
"what,—what will be thy destiny?"

"I will go to Edward Blagden," said I. "A thousand lives, had I as many, and were they all at stake; should not prevent my seeing him."

"Almighty God!" exclaimed Mr. Hanbury, raising his eyes towards Heaven, "this is an hour of tremendous retribution."

I tore myself from Lady Aubrey's grasp;—she fell. I darted out of the room, and hastened to my chamber. After changing my clothes, I flew to the *boudoir*. The door was open to Sir Sidney's apartment, and I beheld Lady Arabella sitting by his pillow. Again I descended to the saloon: my aunt and Mr. Hanbury were gone to visit the dying Edward. I rushed forth like a maniac from his cell of horrors;—my limbs seemed to bear me with supernatural

natural velocity:—I darted across the park. The first break of dawn presented to my view the surrounding ramparts of nature, whose tremendous altitude mingled with the clouds, hiding their heads, as if to shun the horrors of the world beneath. Still I pursued my course,—desperate in misfortune,—but unconscious of premeditated guilt.

When I came to the scene of blood, I rushed towards the parlour, where I beheld Lady Aubrey kneeling on the floor, like the image of despair. By her side on a mattress lay the wretched Judith, in the agonies of death. During the struggle betwixt Edward Blagden and myself, after the pistol was fired through the door, she endeavoured to escape upon a penthouse which projected beneath the window. In the attempt she fell. Almost every bone in her body was shattered by the concussion;—her arm and leg were broken,—her skull fractured,



fractured, and her flesh bruised, while the agonies of a violent death wrung her heart in every fibre.

As I approached her, she smiled, with a ghastly and convulsive expression that made me shiver. "Ah!" exclaimed she, "are you come? Feast, feast your vengeance on the life-blood of your enemy. But there is yet a new torture in store for you—a deed that will curse you!" She writhed with torture, and again her countenance was terribly exulting.—"Perish, perish your hated name," said she, again exerting all her strength to speak. "Go! look at the murdered Edward,—he who has been condemned to obscurity and shame,—while you——"—Again the anguish of her wounds arrested the curse which faltered on her tongue. I turned from the miserable wretch, and, shuddering, flew to the chamber of Edward Blagden. I opened his curtains—and—O God! Rosanna!

Rosanna! every limb seemed petrified with horror; for, in his pale distorted features, I instantly recognized the young highwayman whom I had left, as I thought, expiring near Devizes."

He raised his languid eyes, and feebly uttered a few incoherent words. I could only distinguish the broken sentence,—  
 " My soul—thy hour is come,—yet nature—nature shudders!—Oh! a little—a little mercy!—one short minute, to tell the dreadful secret." He grasped my hand, and bathed it with the cold damp of death. I knelt beside his bed:—  
 —" Generous Walsingham!" said he, " endeavour to forget this dreadful moment. I never was convinced till now;—I suspected that you were the person, by Lady Emily Delvin's letters to Lady Aubrey. The hand of fate has led you hither. I am criminal beyond the hope of mercy." Again he shrunk upon his  
 VOL. IV. B pillow,

pillow, and groaned with contending agonies.

“Walsingham!” said he, fixing his hollow eyes on mine—“prepare!”

“For what?” said I, eagerly.

“Oh God!” continued he, “prepare his heart for this afflicting trial!”—Then turning his mournful gaze towards me, “Nothing less than self-preservation,” said he, “should have armed me against you:—my life was in your hands;—what else could have contaminated my soul, by the infernal thought of murdering—a brother?”

“A brother!”

“The same blood that now gushes from my guilty bosom, warms your aching heart. Oh, Walsingham!” continued he, “you behold in this tortured, wretched atom of human frailty,—the son—of Arthur Ainsforth.”

“My

“My father! Almighty God! is it possible?” said I, falling on his pillow, and pressing his icy hand to my feverish shrinking brain: “I now can account for all the miseries of my past life! for nature strikes conviction to my soul,—and tells me—that Mrs. Blagden—”  
“Is my mother.—The early victim of our fickle parent’s violated promises,” interrupted the ill-fated being. “From the hour of his marriage with Penelope Waller, she vowed to seek revenge. It has been the study, the labour of her days; for when the object of her jealousy expired, her vengeance was transferred to you.”

A convulsive pang arrested the power of articulation;—again he grasped my hand. “Yet another moment—oh, agonizing Death!—another moment to confess the magnitude of crimes!—The poison, which was daily administered to Lady Aubrey, was procured by me.



My affections were devoted to the daughter of the Duchess of Riversford. Want of fortune prevented the alliance, and I married to obtain that pernicious ore which has been my destruction. Had the duchess consented to our union, my soul had now been guiltless; but to procure the means of purchasing the woman of my heart, I had first recourse to the gaming-table. Then—— Oh, Walsingham!—you cannot but remember my next expedient.”

Again he paused:—the agitation of his mind caused his wound to bleed incessantly. His cheek became more livid—his lip assumed a purple hue—his eyes were veiled with the film of death—and the fainting balls seemed to look with anguish through their glassy prison. With a feeble, and scarcely articulate voice, he continued—“I trust that my misguided mother will survive to expiate her crimes by penitence. In  
a few



a few minutes, Wallingham, I shall close my lips in eternal silence. Dreadful moment to appear before the Omnipotent!—so charged with guilt—so trembling at his awful——”

As he spoke, a piercing shriek issued from the room beneath:—I guessed the signal to be that of death. Edward, who also heard it, endeavoured to raise himself in his bed. “Yet a moment,” said he; “one little moment, to implore forgiveness for that wretched being who is gone to render her account before the Throne of Mercy!—Pardon, pardon her, oh Heaven!”—Then, pressing my hand to his bleeding heart, he added—“Bear my contrite sigh to Lady Aubrey—tell her that, in my last moments, I entreated her to remember me with pity.”

A torturing spasm shook his frame to annihilation. He had not power to speak; but, stretching forth his arms,

he fixed his dying eyes upon me, while I leant forward to receive the first—the last embrace of an expiring brother. The effort tore open his wound afresh, and he sunk upon my shoulder:—a short convulsive struggle preceded the parting groan of death, and, in another minute, he was lifeless.

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## CHAP. XCVII.

I RUSHED from the chamber, and descended to the parlour. The door was shut; I hastily opened it. Lady Aubrey had been compelled to quit the scene of horror, and the only object that met my eyes was the blackening corpse of Judith Blagden. She had expired in agonies which mocked the powers of description; every feature was distorted, every limb lacerated and broken. I  
turned

turned away scarcely in my senses, and was darting through the outward room when I felt my arm grasped, and beheld, in the person who detained me, the host of the Black Lion, whom I once knew by the name of honest Ned. He entreated me to hear him for a single moment:—he informed me, that, involved in peril by his kindness to Edward Blagden, he had been obliged to quit his home, and to depend upon his bounty; that he had taken the name of Apprece the better to conceal himself; that he considered me as for ever banished from Glenowen for the indiscretions of my youth, and by the strong hatred of the family.

I interrupted the narrator, by asking who were the persons that nightly traversed the vicinity of the manor-house? He informed me, that, since my return, Mr. Blagden had been concealed in his habitation, hourly expecting my departure;

ture ; that he met his mother every night at the grotto, to concert plans for the purpose of driving me again into exile. He also told me, that my wretched brother had determined never to destroy me, unless assaulted, and in his own defence. This last piece of information made me shrink with horror.

The host then assured me that my person was in no danger ; that he had confirmed the suspicions of the country people of Mrs. Blagden and her son's attempt to poison Lady Aubrey ; that I endeavoured to secure the culprits, in order to consign them to the punishment of the laws ; and that the son perished by his own hands, while the affrighted mother failed in her attempt to escape from the window.

This report, which was indeed the truth, was credited by all ranks of people ; while the fatal secret, which Edward Blagden had reposed in my bosom, remained



remained there, to agonize and sting it. I promised never to reveal what I knew of the misguided host,—and we parted.

I now hastened back to the manor-house, to take a last farewell of the distracted family. The sun had risen; the morning hour was calm and brilliant; but within my anguished bosom all was tempestuous darkness: the cheerful skies seemed to mock the stormy conflicts of my soul, and at that moment the wildest tumult of elemental rage would have been congenial to my senses. I loathed existence;—I began to hate my species. Could I think kindly of those who had never shewn me kindness? Could I, so goaded by perpetual inhumanity, retain one particle of feeling, which might proclaim me human? The world, to me, had been a scene of misery. I had been stung by those blind prejudices which poison society:—chilled by the scorn of empty pride,—and taunted by the per-



petual menaces of poverty: what could be expected from a being whose heart was deadened by the unceasing pressure of affliction, but abhorrence and disgust? It is easy for the fastidiousness of persecuting rigour, to deem the child of misery, whose affections are blighted, whose heart is writhing with despair, vindictive; but reason and nature will proclaim the calumny; the former will, while it blushes for the frailty of the human mind, confess its want of magic to restrain the force of indignation; and the latter will consider resentment as a part of the gross compound which forms, and the electric spirit which actuates the heart of man. There may be souls insensible to injuries, but they are also dead to the dignities of feeling.

It is impossible to describe my sensations as I contemplated the beautiful valley of Glenowen on my way to the manor-house:—that spot, where in my  
infant

infant hours I had first known the sorrows of existence ; where I had been taught by prejudice to place a shield before my heart, which repelled the generous attachment of the ill-fated Sidney. That spot, where the inexorable Judith first felt the gnawing pangs of jealousy, and nursed them into the hydra scorpions of revenge : where a father, forgetting the sanctity of moral precepts, yielded to the guidance of illicit passions ; and—Oh ! memory !—from the severed source of thought yet spare one tear, while I repeat, where,—chilled by the cold neglect of pride and folly,—a dear mother perished ! perished, as I have since learnt, through the machinations of that monster who alienated a sister's affections ; and has, since that fatal moment, never ceased to persecute her devoted offspring.

On entering the manor-house I inquired after Sir Sidney ; and was in-

formed that the female servant who had been left to attend him during Lady Aubrey's absence, had told Lady Arabella, in my cousin's hearing, of all that had happened ;—not without intimating that I was the murderer. To confirm her suspicions, my waistcoat, stained with blood, was produced in the chamber where the sufferer lay ; the sight of it nearly deprived him of his senses, while it almost overwhelmed Lady Arabella with affliction. I hastened to the *boudoir* ; the door which communicated with Sir Sidney's chamber was open, but I was forbid to enter. I then flew to Lady Aubrey's dressing-room, where I found her busied in reading and arranging various written papers : she was too deeply absorbed in thought to notice my approach. There was a kind of stern and steady fortitude in her look and manner, that fixed my attention. I had been in the apartment some time, when she perceived

perceived me, or rather when she found a moment, abstracted from the deep attention of her thoughts: "Walsingham," said she, with a sigh which seemed to labour at her heart, "this is a day of dreadful wonders. The avenging arm of destiny has annihilated your enemies; and those whom it has pleased the great Disposer of events to spare, are bound to do you justice. From the eye of Omnipotence there are no secrets hidden! The crimes of hardened individuals, however they are successful for a time, will inevitably meet the tremendous blow of retribution. I am criminal, dreadfully criminal;—but I will lay open my heart, bleeding with contrition, before the tribunal of my Maker, and bow to the chastening scourge, till I have expiated my offences."

There was an awful sorrow in her tone and gesture, that made my blood almost



almost freeze in every vein.—After a short pause, she continued:—

“This night, the secret of the cabinet shall be unfolded. You will then know, you will explore the source of that insatiable abhorrence, which uniformly actuated the mind of Mrs. Blagden; and through her pernicious influence steeled my breast against the claims of nature and humanity. Such is the tyranny of a malignant spirit, when once entrusted with domestic secrets;—and such the misery of those wretches, whose conduct places them in the power of fordid and revengeful fiends;—who, subtle in the magic of exploring the human mind, only become acquainted with its frailties, to shackle and command all its succeeding movements.”

Her words seemed to collect all my senses, and blend them into that of hearing. I listened with an avidity that scarcely

ly



ly permitted me to breathe :—the circulation at my heart, by turns, beat slow and quickened, as though the fountain of vitality would burst with expectation. Lady Aubrey observed my convulsive agitation ; and, after pressing her hand for a moment upon her eyes, to repel the tears that started in defiance of her fortitude, she again addressed me.

“ I conjure, I entreat you to be calm,” said she ; “ this is not an hour for the frenzy of impetuous passions :—exhaust not the sensibility of your heart, in conflicts ; nature will soon arouse your mind, to agonize and try your strength of resolution. The fate of Sidney,—the happiness of Colonel Aubrey,—your own,—will depend on the elucidation of this eventful epoch. Leave me to arrange my papers ; I would not close my eyes, I would not sleep again with the torturing load which now bruises my guilty heart, to be mistress of the universe.”

“ Com-

“Command,—and your will shall be obeyed,” said I, while I felt an awful presentiment that was undescribable.

She hesitated a few moments. Her bosom seemed to shrink with horror, while her cheek displayed a transient flush of shame.

“I request that you will leave me,” said she. “The business of this event will occupy my attention till the evening. I have committed my beloved Sidney to the care of Lady Arabella and Mr. Hanbury; and I trust that your affluities will be united to theirs, while I perform the task which Heaven enjoins, and which must not be delayed.”

While my aunt was speaking, a servant delivered a letter from Isabella. She merely glanced at the name, and then presented it to me. I read the following lines:—

“Chepstow;

“Com-

“ Chepstow.

“ In a few hours, I shall be the wife of Lord Kencarth. I have followed your counsel; and, notwithstanding Walsingham’s resolution to marry Lady Arabella, I yet trust and hope that Heaven will avert the blow, which would annihilate the dearest of mortals. Your resolution to unfold the mystery which has too long undermined your Sidney’s repose, may restore to your breast that tranquillity, which can only be the result of conscious rectitude. Delay not a moment, I conjure you: reflect, that the happiness of one object, the prosperity of another, and the existence of a third, are events of too much importance to bear procrastination. The object of my choice, sensible of all his past indiscretions, will, I trust, by the fortune which Mr. Randolph has bequeathed to me, be enabled to enjoy those pure and rational delights

delights which he never experienced in the vortex of dissipation. He is a repentant transgressor,—and the eye of contrition looks with hope, even to offended Heaven. Can the weakness of a mortal, then, refuse to pardon?

“ When I reflect on the dreadful, the solemn oath which fear induced you to extort from Sidney, I tremble! Oh! absolve him by a confession,—a voluntary confession—snatch the beloved, the guiltless victim, from disgrace, lest the grave should yawn for revenge, and death demand a sacrifice which would make nature shudder.

“ Farewell, my dear Lady Aubrey. Assure the suffering Sidney of my inviolable affection, and persuade the mistaken Walsingham to accept that friendship which has ever warmed my heart, and allowed him the name—the tender name of—brother. More, I never felt;—and less, I will not offer.

“ I am



"I am hastening towards Bristol, where, with my brother's consent, and that of Lady Kencarth, I shall soon commence the duties of domestic attachment; and I trust, that the meek lustre of esteem will not be less grateful to a husband's feelings, because it will be heightened by the glow of fond affection.

"Once more farewell.—Say all that is proper to my brother;—every thing that is kind to the dear Sidney;—and add one more assurance of inviolable friendship to the generous, but misguided Walsingham.

"ISABELLA."

I returned the letter to Lady Aubrey, and hastened to my chamber, where I passed the remainder of the day till twilight. The variety of sorrows that divided my regrets,—the dreadful and recent events which awakened me to anguish,



anguish, rendered the marriage of Isabella an affliction of less magnitude than it would have been at any other period. The fever of the mind, like that of the body, presents the greatest peril when it attacks us amidst the plenitude of enjoyment. I was woe-worn to the very acmé of despair: I had no hope, no palliating dream, to lull my senses;—they were wild with persecution, and armed, terribly armed, for the worst that could assail them.

As twilight advanced, I stole from my chamber to the *boudoir*. I found that Mr. Hanbury had been some time with Lady Aubrey. All was silent in Sir Sidney's apartment, and I concluded that he slept. I threw myself on a sofa, and waited in silent sorrow for his awaking. After I had passed near an hour in this still recess, with no light but that which a wood fire afforded, Lady Arabella gently opened the door of Sir Sidney's room, and

and requested that I would give her a phial of medicine which stood on the table. I poured it into a glass;—she received it from my hand, and Sir Sidney instantly swallowed it. Lady Arabella assured me that he was considerably tranquillized,—and again I flung myself on the sofa, to indulge my mournful ruminations, till the hour of awful disclosure. From time to time Lady Arabella stole to the door, which was a-jar, to inform me how much she thought my amiable cousin better. I had no senses but for expectation. Every nerve of thought was occupied to agony, and minutes seemed ages while they were lengthened by impatience.

## CHAP. XCVIII.

AN hour after the close of day I received a summons to attend Lady Aubrey in her dressing-room. I flew almost with the swiftness of thought, and in a moment presented myself before her. Mr. Hanbury was already there, and his countenance bore marks of profound and mournful impressions. My aunt drew her chair towards the table, which was covered with a number of writings; she made a signal for me to take my seat, and Mr. Hanbury, with emphatic solemnity, began to read the last will of the deceased Sir Edward Aubrey. I shall not trouble you, Rosanna, with the tedious forms and repetitions of the law; but merely give you a brief abstract of this important paper.

At

At the time of Sir Edward's making his will Lady Aubrey was pregnant; he therefore bequeathed to the expected offspring, in case of its being a son, the extensive and rich domains of Glenowen, together with the manor-house, plate, furniture, pictures, and library; and the sum of sixty thousand pounds, to be paid when the said heir male should arrive at the age of twenty-one; with the farther sum of six thousand pounds *per annum* for the expences of the board, education, and travels of the said heir from the age of twelve to seventeen.

He also bequeathed eight thousand pounds to Walsingham Ainsforth, to be paid on his attaining the age of twenty-one: three hundred pounds *per annum* to be paid by Lady Aubrey for the education of the said Walsingham Ainsforth, from the age of nine years to that of seventeen.

To



To Judith Blagden, in consideration of her services to Sir Edward's deceased mother, and her attachment to Frances Lady Aubrey, the sum of three thousand pounds: but, in case of the death of Walsingham Ainsforth, a farther sum of two thousand pounds, to be paid within one month after his decease.

In case the offspring of Lady Aubrey should be a female, the estate of Glenowen and all the appurtenances thereunto belonging, devolving on Sir Edward's brother Colonel Aubrey, he bequeathed the sum of thirty thousand pounds to the said daughter, to be paid on her attaining her eighteenth year, with three hundred pounds annually for board and education. The legacy to Walsingham Ainsforth to be twenty thousand pounds, and that to Mrs. Blagden one thousand only. The remainder, deducting Lady Aubrey's marriage-settlement of twelve hundred pounds *per annum*, to go with the estate



to Colonel Aubrey and his heirs for ever.

I heard the will read to the last line without the smallest emotion: the petty fraud which had robbed me of the sum allowed for my education, could not awaken a sentiment of regret in a bosom so deeply wounded, or a mind so habituated to all the dreadful varieties of sorrow. Mr. Hanbury folded the paper; his hand trembled, and the paleness of death stole over Lady Aubrey's features.

"Now Walsingham," said she, "prepare to hear the fatal secret of my soul; prepare to execrate a wretch, whose life has been devoted to avarice and deception."

The agitation which shook her frame, made her tongue falter—she paused.

"Oh, madam!" said I, "do not, do not hesitate to unfold this momentous mystery. There is nothing material in Sir Ed-

ward's will—nothing but what *I* can forgive, and *I* alone am injured.”

She struggled with the anguish of her mind, and with a desperate resolution exclaimed—“Hear, hear it then, Walsingham, and let the agonizing confession touch your heart to pity—I have no son! the wretched, the ill-fated Sidney is my daughter!”

I shrunk almost to annihilation—the powers of language failed to express the astonishment that possessed my mind.

“Yes, Walsingham,” continued Lady Aubrey, “that persecuted angel, whose romantic, whose invincible attachment to you has involved her in so many sorrows, is my daughter—the daughter of Sir Edward Aubrey.”

“Almighty God! support, sustain my soul under this new trial of its faculties!” said I. “This is, indeed, an hour of wonders! All that has passed now rushes on my memory in proof of what you

you have disclosed. What a fool—what a blind, thoughtless fool have I been!—How unworthily, how barbarously have I repaid this heroic attachment! Oh! let me hasten to implore forgiveness—let me, at the feet of the generous Sidney, breathe forth the anguish of compunction.”

“Tranquillize your mind,” said Mr. Hanbury, interrupting me, “and recollect that you have many moments yet to come, which will require considerable address, and no less delicacy. The amiable Sidney is not prepared for this disclosure, which has been hastened by the death of Mrs. Blagden. Bound by a solemn oath, before she quitted Switzerland, your amiable cousin engaged herself never to declare her sex during the lifetime of Lady Aubrey, without her free permission. The origin of her disguise was Mrs. Blagden’s avarice, and her hatred of you as the son of her detested rival. Thus we see the dreadful

s 2

effects.

effects of that treachery in our sex, which too often arms the female mind against the sensibilities of pity; while it urges the deluded victim on to every species of depravity. The amiable Sidney has been educated in masculine habits; but every affection of her heart is beautifully feminine; heroic though tender, and constant, though almost hopeless. She will, nevertheless, demand some time to fashion her manners to the graces of her sex. For your sake, Walsingham, she has endured many months of perpetual inquietude; her machinations to prevent your forming a matrimonial alliance were prompted by that passion which subdued the voice of reason, and, the fastidious will say, violated the laws of strict propriety. Yet, let it be remembered; that her virtues, her sensibility, were her own;—her crime, if the concealment of her sex can be considered criminal, was Lady Aubrey's."



My aunt now ventured a few words as a feeble extenuation of her conduct.

—“ I have been the dupe of an inhuman persecuting wretch,” said she, bursting into tears. “ Shortly after my

sister’s marriage with Arthur Ainsforth, Mrs. Blagden, in confidence, revealed the story of her seduction. I heard and

pitied her. The offspring of her credulity was placed at nurse as her nephew; and though I lamented my sister’s

alliance with your father, I still forbore to wound her bosom with the knowledge of his unworthiness. At the time of

Sidney’s birth, my mind was agitated by hope and fear. The extraordinary will

of Sir Edward held out a strong temptation to that avarice which has ever been a prominent feature of my mind. Mrs.

Blagden availed herself of this despicable passion, and suggested the idea of concealing the sex of the infant Sidney.

I acquiesced; from that fatal moment I



was the slave of her dominion. We travelled from place to place on the Continent, ever alarmed, and perpetually in danger of discovery. After many years had passed, the dread of Colonel Aubrey's just resentment confirmed the fatal fraud; and nothing but the death of my detested tyrant could have unveiled the mystery, or restored to happiness the suffering, devoted Sidney."

"All-seeing Heaven!" exclaimed I, "how blind, how misguided is the human heart! All the trifling crowds of women appear as shadows of the sex, when compared with this transcendent, this unequalled Sidney. Why, why have I so long been deprived of such a pure and generous friend?"

"The name of friend is too chilling for such a bosom as your cousin's," interrupted Mr. Hanbury. "The hour will shortly arrive when you must allow her a dearer title, or avoid her society  
for

for ever; for that affection which was sustained by hope, would, if rejected, terminate in despair. All that has passed must be buried in oblivion. Colonel Aubrey is now lord of Glenowen.—Your aunt and the amiable Sidney, if it should please Heaven to restore her, will return to Switzerland—time will, I trust, reconcile them to Colonel Aubrey.”

“Is there an act of kindness or generosity which may not be expected from Colonel Aubrey?” said I. “Can so benignant, so liberal a heart be closed against such a sufferer as the heroic Sidney? He knows how strongly she was interested in his favour—How often her heart has been agonized by the fatal secret! He has heard the innocent, the indignant child pleading at the feet of her misguided mother—pleading for him—for me—for the rectitude of her bosom—the virtues and the wrongs of her neglected uncle.”

Lady Aubrey hid her face on Mr. Hanbury's arm, and shuddered.

"Spare me, Oh, Walsingham! I conjure you to spare me," said she; "I am already tortured by compunction—Do not suppress the energies of awakened truth, by the anguish of despair. Let me, let me live to expiate my offences."

As she spoke, Lady Arabella rushed into the room; her countenance evinced the horrors of her mind, while she scarcely articulated—"Oh, Lady Aubrey! Sidney—the dear, dear Sidney is dying."

"Rosanna, I must be brief, or the pang that wrings my heart will arrest my pen.—Here description falls—the poignancy of anguish mocks the feeble power of words, and the hand that has traced the sorrows of my life, is convulsed with agitation. The tear, the groan of torture could no longer relieve the burning anguish of my heart. My brain seemed to shrink—my limbs

to petrify—while Lady Arabella disclosed the dreadful event.

I—I had destroyed the amiable Sidney.

The drug which I had given her was laudanum—the contents of the phial which I had purchased for my own destruction, and which had been incautiously left upon the table in her boudoir.

The distracted state of my mind at the moment when I delivered the pernicious potion to Lady Arabella's hand, occasioned the terrible mistake. I was hopeless—wild—distracted.

I hastened to the chamber, and, throwing myself beside her bed, pressed the dear, senseless, persecuted Sidney to my tortured bosom—Mr. Hanbury would have torn me from her; but the frenzy of my soul gave strength to every artery in my fevered frame, and I could at that moment have encountered a lion's fury.



My despair at length became ungovernable. Again I snatched the dear victim of inexorable fate to my palpitating heart:—she breathed. I kissed her cold and livid cheek, and, exhausted by the agonies of my soul, fell senseless beside her.

Fearing the consequences that might await this dreadful event, Mr. Hanbury had me instantly removed to the parsonage. I was led by two domestics. The bleak blast from the mountains reanimated my senses, and awakened my aching memory to an accumulation of anguish. Oh, Rosanna! what an age of misery was comprised in that short hour! The bosom of Nature trembled at the violation of her laws. The wind seemed to rock the stupendous mountains, while my tortured groans were lost amidst its howlings.

At day-break a chaise was procured, and I, in compliance with Mr. Hanbury's entreaties,



entreaties, set out with the faithful Andrew for London. On my arrival, I repaired to my friend Mr. Optic, in whose sympathizing breast I confided the fatal secret. After conjuring him to take charge of my affairs,—to secure an annuity of three hundred pounds on old Andrew, and one of the same sum on Griffith Blagden, I departed for Dover. A packet-boat was ready to sail for Ostend. I embarked. I committed myself to the precarious element, a hopeless, lost, forlorn, despairing exile!

Such, Rosanna, such is the distracted mortal whom your gentle nature pities; the being who, while his hand concludes the dreadful detail of unexampled sorrows, looks forward with a mournful smile of resignation to that grave which opens to receive him: for, to these eyes, the sun may rise and set, and rise again, without displaying one animated prospect,

spect, one spot on this vast globe, which is not overshadowed by despair.

I go—benignant child of pity, to that dark and silent home, where my wasting withering heart will find repose which this unfeeling world denied it. Remember, amiable Rosanna, remember the victim of deception—the ill-fated—the persecuted Walsingham!—and Oh! mild and soothing spirit of benevolence! when you again peruse my melancholy story, let pity draw a veil over the darkest shades, and let the softer tints be, for once, irradiated by the unsullied tear of sacred sympathy.

### WALSINGHAM to ROSANNA.

Luxemburg, March 12, 1792.

"I depart this instant for Switzerland. Ah, Rosanna! Sidney Aubrey lives! The poison of the pernicious drug was counteracted, and it flies—to  
 d 2 expiate

expiate my crime—to idolize her virtues.

“Farewel, sweet and enlightened friend!—soother of pain—and monitress of reason—farewel. I am wild with the agony of joy:—it is an inexplicable sensation:—the soul which is not finely organized can never know it. Ah, Rossanna! may you never experience those sorrows, the reverse of which, alone, can draw it into action.

“Farewel; once more farewel.

“W.A.”

Colonel Abercromby, soon after my de-

*The Same to the Same.*

Glenowen, August 27, 1792.

“This day has overpaid me ten-fold for all the anguish I have hitherto experienced. The stormy scene, I trust, is past for ever; and the brightening prospect at length soothes my mind, almost exhausted by perpetual persecution. The prejudices

prejudices of early infancy, originating in the most barbarous deception, are completely counteracted by the virtues, the heroic virtues of my transcendent Sidney! Indeed, so completely is she changed, so purely gentle, so feminine in manners; while her mind still retains the energy of that richly-treasured dignity of feeling which are the effects of a masculine education, that I do not lament past sorrows, while my heart triumphs, nobly triumphs in the felicity of present moments.

“ Colonel Aubrey, soon after my departure from Glenowen, surrendered himself on the charge of Lord Linbourne’s death, and was acquitted by the laws of equity and honour. He has sanctioned my alliance with the amiable Sidney:—he has received with open arms the offending Lady Aubrey,—and he has blest her children with the affection of a father.

“ My



“ My worthy friend Mr. Optic, whose genuine excellence of heart is almost unexampled, on the embarrassment of Lord Kencarth’s finances, sheltered and supported the venerable Griffith, till the annuity which I requested him to purchase could be completely secured. The good old sailor is now, unconscious of his daughter’s criminality, settled in Glamorganshire. The fortune which Mrs. Blagden left, has, by Colonel Aubrey’s commands, been distributed among her indigent relations. Is not this the perfection of philanthropy? Does it not prove the generosity of that noble disinterested nature, which has uniformly characterised the most liberal of mortals? ”

“ Lady Arabella is become the sober wife of Walter Hanbury; and the honest Andrew is as great “ a laird as ony o’ his clan, in the Highlands of Scotland.”

You



You must remember that, in my opinion, greatness consists in VIRTUE!

"This letter will be delivered to you by the Duchess of Heartwing, who, abandoned by her dissipated lord, retires on a separate maintenance of six hundred pounds *per annum* to her native country, after passing a few weeks at Spa for the benefit of the waters. Mr. Obitie, with my friend Kencarth, and his amiable Isabella are here, to witness my felicity:—the viscount, a repentant rover, and his gentle amiable mistress, the happy origin of a reformation which graces her power, and evinces his understanding.

"Now, Rosanna, retired from the busy varying scenes of noise and folly, I leave those trifling vicious reptiles whom you have met with during the progress of my disastrous story, to the infamy that will mark their names, till fate consigns them

to

to oblivion. I have held them up as beacons, to warn the unwary: I have portrayed them, as they are; neither with a flattering nor a distorting pencil. If they continue to triumph over the children of worth and genius, it will only prove that, in this undefinable sphere, where the best and wisest cannot hope for happiness, the *demons of art* are permitted to oppress with wrongs, while they lift the empty brow of arrogance and pride above the illustrious pupils of GENIUS, TRUTH, and NATURE!

“Amiable Rosanna! benign and gentle patroness of sorrow and of virtue! whose example cheers the good, and whose pity soothes the unhappy, accept my grateful friendship,—and farewell.

“WALSINGHAM AINSFORTH.”

THE END.

## ERRATA.

### VOL. I.

- Page 7. line 5. *for return read revolve*  
 14. — 21. *for divest read divert*  
 263. — 7. *for dotted read doted*

### VOL. II.

- Page 221. line 6. *for associates read associate*  
 333. — 2. *for passed read remained*

### VOL. III.

- Page 24. line ult. *for perpetual read incessant*  
 30. — 19 *for gane read elegant*  
 184. — 14. *for ladyship's read ladyship*  
 223. — 11. *after and insert :*  
 260. — 11. *read a bold*  
 277. — 13. *for presents read unfolds*  
 296. — 20. *for appear read Lem*

### VOL. IV.

- Page 34. line 13. *for earned read followed*  
 104. — 2. *for features read feathers*  
 169. — 12. *for take read have*  
 280. — 14. *for physician's read physician*  
 360. — 10. *for torture read pang*

## POETICAL WORKS,

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**P**OEMS. In Two Volumes, Octavo. With a Portrait of the Author, from a Painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

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*Critical Review, July 1792.*

"If a great variety of refined sentiments, sometimes of the tender but more commonly of the plaintive kind, adorned with rich and beautiful imagery, and expressed in sweetly harmonious verse, can entitle the Poetical Productions of a Female pen to public praise, Mrs. Robinson's Poems will obtain no inconsiderable share of applause. They chiefly belong to the classes of Ode, Elegy, and Sonnet, and are written upon topics well suited to the Muse, whom our Poet seems chiefly to have invoked. But of the multitude of elegant pieces which invite Selection, we fix upon the following Specimens, &c. &c. &c.

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*Analytical Review, July 1791.*

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*le Monde*," though it was an English Poem. Many of the readers of that animated Compliment to the Genius of Mr. MERRY looked on it, we doubt not, as a pleasing Specimen of Mrs. ROBINSON'S Talents for Poetical Composition; but if People of Taste and Judgment were impudged with a favourable idea of the Poetess from the merits of that performance, they will deem yet higher of our ENGLISH SAPPHO, after the perusal of the present volume; in which are some Pieces equal perhaps to the best productions (so far as the knowledge of them is come to us) of the *Lesbian Dame*, in point of Tenderness, Feeling, Poetic Imagery, Warmth, Elegance, and above all, DELICACY of EXPRESSION, in which our ingenious Countrywoman FAR EXCELS all that we know of the Works of the GRECIAN SAPPHO." *Monthly Rev. Dec. 1791.*

"To the susceptible and feeling mind, this volume of Poems is peculiarly addressed. Here the pensive muse utters its complaints in murmurs sweetly plaintive; and soothing to the ear of melancholy. The fair Writer seems, in many instances, to have consulted her own heart in the choice of her subjects."

*Impartial Review for 1792, page 59.*

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"Having more than once borne honourable testimony to Mrs. Robinson's Poetical Talents, we are happy to find our former opinion confirmed, by the success with which, at least as far as Poetry is concerned, this Lady has executed the difficult task of writing a Tragedy. We observe that the piece has not appeared upon the stage; but we have not been informed whether it has been offered for representation. How far the play is adapted for stage exhibition, theatrical managers are perhaps more competent judges than literary critics; but, we own, we can discover no objections to its being brought upon the stage, except those, which certainly do not diminish its poetical merit; the variety of moral reflections, and its uniform elegance of diction, and harmony of versification. The story is highly interesting, and well adapted to excite strong emotions of sympathy. It is a tale of hopeless woe, and presents to the reader's imagination no small portion both of the dignity and pathos of tragedy." *Analyt. Review, April 1796.*

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